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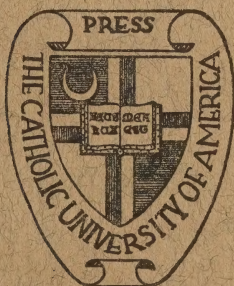
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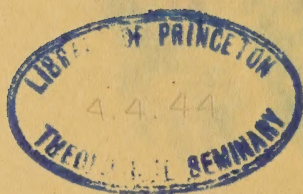
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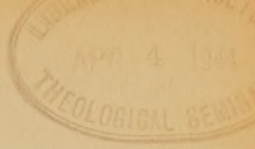
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SOME ANGLO-AMERICAN CONVERTS TO
CATHOLICISM PRIOR TO 1829

This dissertation was conducted under the direction of Professor Richard J. Purcell, Ph.D., LL.B., as major professor and was approved by the Reverend Edward Dowd, S.T.D., and the Reverend John T. Ellis, Ph.D., as readers.

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Some Anglo-American Converts to Catholicism Prior to 1829

BY

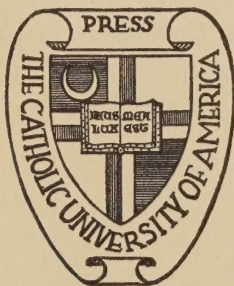
SISTER LAURITA GIBSON, M.A.

OF

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NAZARETH
NAZARETH, KENTUCKY

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND
SCIENCES OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON, D. C.

1943

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Archbishop of Baltimore and Washington

August 4, 1943

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TO
MY SISTERS

PREFACE

This dissertation seeks to portray, through a series of biographical sketches, the conversion and influence of certain native American converts to the Catholic Church, viewed in the light of the social, political, and religious development of the country. Because of the scope of the work it was thought advisable to delimit the time to 1829, thus leaving the later years to two future studies. A second volume might embrace the period from 1829 to the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1866, a period teeming with new philosophies and new problems. Prominent among the converts admitted into the Catholic body during this second period were Orestes Brownson, Isaac Hecker, Mrs. Dana Ripley, James Roosevelt Bayley, Levi Silliman Ives, Jedediah Huntington, John McLaughlin, Peter H. Burnett, Virginia Scott (the daughter of General Winfield Scott), and the Rosecrans Brothers, William S. and Sylvester. A third volume would include an even greater variety and diversity of persons who made submission to Rome.

The first Anglo-American converts were some two hundred and fifty captives who had been carried to Canada during the inter-colonial wars. The writer has selected for detailed accounts individuals whose families were conspicuous in the annals of New England and of whom more specific data might be gathered. The Edward E. Ayer Collection of the Newberry Library in Chicago is the chief deposit for the narratives of those captives made by the French and Indians. Most of the records are obtainable from the Library of Congress. The principal Canadian sources are the convent annals of the Ursulines and Hospitallers in Quebec and the Hospitallers and the Society of Notre Dame in Montreal. In most cases only the names of the individuals have been preserved and these through naturalization or baptismal records. Charlotte Alice Baker was a pioneer in the work of collecting these names and of relating family histories as far as this was possible. Naturally, despite her

endeavors to be fair, her work was influenced by her Puritan background. Emma Coleman enlarged upon the work of Miss Baker. In 1936 Sister Mary Leo Clement Fallon wrote a doctoral dissertation at Boston College on "Early New England Nuns." This study purports to go a step further: it has undertaken to depict the lives of these individuals in their historical setting as a contribution to the history of the Catholic Church in North America.

The national period gave birth to new ideas and principles which had been gradually evolving in the colonial era. Since American philosophy was cradled in the nursery of Protestant theology, a transition chapter treating of the status of religion in pre-Revolutionary days has been introduced as a basis for understanding the mental and religious differences in which the convert to Catholicism found himself. Often one who was brave enough to follow his convictions and enter the Catholic Church was ostracized by his Protestant brethren and suspected by his new coreligionists.

Concerning the difficulties of these converts Catholic parish histories, few in number and meager in detail, offer scanty material. Early bishops and missionaries spoke vaguely of the many converts who had been received into the Catholic Church, but they generally neglected either to mention their names or to note their local standing. For this reason it was judged better to treat the lives of outstanding converts than to attempt a catalog of names, such as may be found in Scannell O'Neill, *Converts to Rome in America* (1921). W. Gordan Gorman in his *Lists of Converts* (1884) enumerates some three thousand in the English-speaking countries during the nineteenth century. Incomplete lists may be found in the appendix of *The American Convert Movement* (1923) by Father Edward Mannix.

Investigation of the Anglo-American converts has proved a most interesting subject. The writer wishes to take this opportunity to express her appreciation to the Reverend Joseph B. Code, Sc.Hist.D., who suggested the study. A very special debt of gratitude is due to Professor Richard J. Purcell, Ph.D., LL.B., under whose guidance the work was prepared. The author is grateful to the Reverend Edward Dowd, S.T.D., and the Reverend John Tracy Ellis, Ph.D., for critical reading of the manuscript.

It is a pleasure to thank those who have so generously cooperated in this work: William A. L. Styles, M.D., of Montreal, Sister Mary Ignatia McDonald, S.M., of Manchester, New Hampshire, the archivists of the Ursuline Nuns of Quebec and Three Rivers, the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu of Quebec and Montreal, and the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Montreal, the archivists of Woodstock College, Woodstock, Maryland, the Visitation Nuns of Georgetown, D. C., and the Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg, Maryland. Special mention should be made of the Reverend P. J. O'Callaghan of Limerick, Ireland, the Reverend Dr. Robert H. Lord of Brighton Seminary, Brighton, Massachusetts, the Reverend John E. Sexton, D.D., of Brighton, Massachusetts, the Reverend James Kortendick, S.S., of Washington, D. C., Allyn B. Forbes of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Mr. William B. Wheelwright of Cambridge, Massachusetts, Lawrence C. Floyd of the General Theological Seminary of New York City, the late Thomas F. Meehan of New York City, Stewart H. Holbrook of Seattle, Washington, Mrs. Cyrus Ellis and Mrs. William Carroll of Washington, D. C.

For the various courtesies extended by the University of Vermont, the Vermont Historical Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the State Archives of Boston, the Public Library of Boston, the Riggs Memorial Library of Georgetown University, the Mullen Library of the Catholic University of America, the National Archives and the Library of Congress the author wishes to express thanks. To Mother Ann Sebastian Sullivan, Superior General of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, in Kentucky, and to the members of the congregation the writer gives fealty and love in return for interest and encouragement.

—SISTER LAURITA GIBSON, S.C.N.

Nazareth, Ky.

PART I

NEW ENGLAND CAPTIVE CONVERTS IN CANADA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Only in recent years have historians come to realize the part played by the French Canadians in the civil and religious life of our country. Even now the story is far from complete, and until it is told in its entirety, there cannot be a proper appreciation of the influence of French culture in the United States. The early colonials hated the French, and the outbreak of the French and Indian wars in 1689 further aroused and heightened this hatred. They believed themselves subjected to the self-same Catholic threat against their existence that the English of the mother country had experienced in the days of Elizabeth.¹ Moreover, during this period of the inter-colonial wars the English colonists held the French authorities and clergy responsible for the suffering and retaliation inflicted on them during the Indian raids, for almost without exception the Indians were said to be from the Catholic

¹ Arthur J. Riley, *Catholicism in New England to 1788* (1936), *passim*; Sister Mary Augustina Ray, *American Opinion of Roman Catholicism* (1936), *passim*; Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade* (1938), 1-30. Protestants were aroused when Louis XIV in 1685 revoked the Edict of Nantes granted by Henry IV in 1598 and inaugurated a cruel persecution of the French Huguenots. With the exception of Vauban and Saint Simon all the great men of that period highly approved of the revocation. Innocent XI expressed his displeasure at the drastic measures. He at the same time was struggling against the four articles known as the *Declaration du clergé français*, which he annulled in a transcript (April 11, 1682). Since James II supported the autocratic King Louis XIV, Innocent XI had less sympathy for the Catholic King of England when he was overthrown.—Antoine Degert, "Huguenots," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1910), VII, 534-535; Michael Ott, "Innocent XI," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1910), VIII, 21-22. For complete treatment see Louis O'Brien, *Innocent XI and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* (1930).

missions,² and few, if any, of the New England outposts were free from their tomahawk, torch, and musket. Particularly singled out for destruction were the settlements of York, Portland, Rye, and Wells in Maine, Durham, Berwick, and Salem in New Hampshire, Schenectady in New York, and Groton, Haverhill, and Deerfield in Massachusetts.³

The grievances of the French against the English may be traced back to 1613 when Captain Samuel Argall of Virginia destroyed the Jesuit mission on Mount Desert Island, off the coast of Maine, and the French settlement of Port Royal in Acadia.⁴ Parkman says, "In a semi-piratical descent, an obscure stroke of lawless violence began the strife of France and England, Protestantism and Rome, which for a century and a half shook the struggling communities of North America, and closed at last in the memorable triumph on the Plains of Abraham."⁵ In 1629 the English sent an expedition under Admiral Kirke against Quebec. Champlain, overwhelmed by superior forces, surrendered and was sent to England.⁶ From 1628 to 1632 England held Quebec and Tadoussac as well as the broad region loosely known as Acadia.⁷

² Ray, *op. cit.*, 196, 224.

³ Francis Parkman, *Half Century of Conflict* (1892), I, *passim*; C. Alice Baker, *True Stories of New England Captives* (1897), *passim*.

⁴ Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791* [hereafter referred to as *Jesuit Relations*] (1896), II, 247-275; (1897), III, 5-19; (1897), IV, 9-79; Alexander Brown, *The Genesis of the United States* (1890), II, 709-725; Edward Channing, *History of the United States* (1908), I, 103; Francis Parkman, *Pioneers of France in the New World* (1874), 279-290.

⁵ Parkman, *Pioneers*, 295. Cf. Pierre F. X. de Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*, translated by John Gilmary Shea (1871), II, 277-284; Jean Baptiste Ferland, *Cours d'histoire du Canada* (1861), I, 83-89.

⁶ Samuel de Champlain, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*, edited by H. P. Biggar (1936), VI, 64-186; F. X. Garneau, *L'Histoire du Canada*, translated by A. Bell (1860), I, 89; Charles W. Colby, *The Founders of New France* (1915), 146; Parkman, *Pioneers*, 439-444; George M. Wrong, *The Canadians* (1938), 63.

⁷ Acadia included not only the peninsula, which today is known as Nova Scotia, but also New Brunswick and the land west of the Kennebec.

By the treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye (1632), involving both mother countries, France recovered her possessions in the New World, and Champlain returned again as governor of New France. According to George Chalmers it was restoration of this territory to France that commenced the long train of ills suffered by both parties.⁸ It must be remembered, however, that in 1632 the American dependencies of France and Britain were merely in a nascent state and almost equally poor in material resources. The return to France of her possessions ushered in a new era for the French in America. The Hundred Associates, organized by Richelieu in 1627, gave their support. On the dissolution of this Company (1663), New France became a royal colony which prospered notwithstanding Iroquois depredations. Meanwhile New England enjoyed a period of growth and expansion with the tide of immigration yearly increasing. By the year 1689, however, a change had taken place in the relative circumstances of the respective French and English colonies in North America.⁹

It has well been stated that the chief cause of contention among men is the tendency to seize what rightfully belongs to another. The English frontier settlements, continually approaching French territory, created a struggle for possession. English colonials suffered more because their location made them accessible to the planned attacks of the Franco-Canadian government to arrest their onward march. On the other hand, the French settlements in Acadia and the Indian missions along the sea coast became the objects of counter attacks by the English.¹⁰

In the struggle between the two colonial groups the Indians for the most part sided with the French. Although the New Englanders possessed a less monarchical and hieratic form of government than New France, they did not see the feasibility of granting equality to all people. From the very beginning the Spanish and French had recognized the value of the missionary's influence over the Indians in the building of an empire. To the missionary "a naked savage was not merely one more soul to

⁸ George Chalmers, *Political Annals of the Colonies in the Present United States* (1780), I, 112.

⁹ Garneau, *op. cit.*, I, 314.

¹⁰ Channing, *op. cit.*, II, 540-541; Parkman, *Half Century*, I, 106-116.

save, but really and truly a potential builder of a new civilization."¹¹ Consequently, French treatment differed so greatly from English treatment that it is not strange that the Indians, for the most part, adhered to the former.

Neither is it astonishing that the French viewed with horror the possibility of falling under English rule whose system of penal laws made Catholicism a crime. The literature of the day bears ample testimony that the English colonies were constantly warned by their magistrates and ministers against everything Catholic. Laws, proclamations, newspapers, sermons, and religious tracts all breathed a most unchristian hatred of the Church, the clergy, and the faithful.¹² The position of the missionaries in tribes along the frontiers of the French and English possessions became one of constant danger, and they could continue their

¹¹ George M. Shuster, *The Catholic Spirit in America* (1927), 81. The Englishman's injustice to the Indians is well-known. He traded with them, fought with them, but it was long before he made any attempt to raise their thoughts to God.—John Gilmary Shea, "Puritanism in New England," *American Catholic Quarterly Review* [hereafter referred to as *A. C. Q. R.*], IX (1884), 85. Cf. James Douglas, "Attitude of New England towards the Indians and the Puritan Missions," *New England and New France* (1913), 443-466. With the exception of John Eliot (1604-1690), whose fame rests on his labors to Christianize the Indians in Massachusetts, there were in the English colonies no great missionaries in the seventeenth century. Eliot's efforts in behalf of the Indians did not receive general support and "were viewed with an evil eye."—John Gilmary Shea, "The Earliest Discussions of the Catholic Question in New England," *A. C. Q. R.*, VI (1881), 218. The Reverend Solomon Stoddard declared the Indians should be looked upon as "thieves and murderers." He proposed hunting them with dogs, "the same as we do bears," as the best and only way of tracking them to their dens.—Samuel Adams Drake, *The Border Wars of New England* (1897), 166. In the eighteenth century Eleazer Wheelock (1711-1779) envisaged a plan for educating and converting the Indians. His school, known as Moor's Indian School, later became Dartmouth College. As Indian training became superfluous, the institution continued as a regular college.—Fred Chase, *History of Dartmouth College and the Town of Hanover to 1815* (1891), *passim*. The chief Protestant missionaries among the Indians in the eighteenth century were David (1718-1749) and John Brainerd (1720-1781).—Harris E. Starr, "David Brainerd," *Dictionary of American Biography* [hereafter referred to as *D. A. B.*] (1929), II, 591-592, and "John Brainerd," *D. A. B.* (1929), II, 593-594.

¹² Ray, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

labors only by conforming to the Canadian authorities to whom they looked for understanding, protection, and support.¹³

Upon the question of Indian warfare it was difficult for our colonial forbears to think calmly. Unfortunately as well as unjustly the Catholic Church in New France was held responsible for the bloody deeds perpetrated by the Indians. To the Church the Indian was a potential Christian and a future citizen, and for this reason the French Government did not differentiate between the red and the white man. The English, on the other hand, followed a policy of extermination and as early as 1637 had adopted the practice of purchasing heads.¹⁴ By the time of King Philip's War (1675) the custom of scalping had extended into New England.¹⁵ Consequently, when the French and Indian wars broke out, both sides paid the Indian allies for scalps of their enemies. True, French Canada about 1690 had begun the practice of paying for English scalps, but three years later the English had retaliated by purchasing the scalps of Frenchmen. When the

¹³ John Gilmary Shea, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States* (1886), I, 592.

¹⁴ Georg Friederici, "Scalping in America," *Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institute* (1907), 433. The fact is explained that the Algonquins of New England and eastern New York along the Hudson did not scalp, but were head hunters. The tribes of the Hurons, the Iroquois, and the Muskogean linguistic families behaved in a similar manner. Scalping was practiced by the tribes of the lower St. Lawrence and in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and along the Delaware and Chesapeake Bay down to the Carolinas.—*Ibid.* 425-433. For other articles on scalping see *Dictionary of American History* (1940), V, 37; *New International Encyclopedia* (1935), XX, 515; *Americana* (1938), XXIV, 349; Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 166, 192.

¹⁵ Scalping became so profitable that no fewer than seven companies of rangers were engaged in scouring the woods during the winter of 1704. This policy relieved the authorities of the expense of maintaining an equal force of enlisted men.—Drake, *op. cit.*, 167. Hannah Duston (Dustin), living in the pioneer settlement of Haverhill, Massachusetts, received due recognition when she outwitted her Indian captors (1697) and returned home with ten Indian scalps.—George W. Chase, *The History of Haverhill* (1861), 152, 185-197, 308, 658; R. B. Caverly, *Heroism of Hannah Duston* (1874), 19-21. Chase bases his account on the Reverend Cotton Mather's *Magnalia*.

white man fell into the hands of the Indians, he was according to Indian usage the property of his captor.¹⁶ The French were too anxious to keep the friendship of their allies to abrogate this custom. To mitigate the concomitant horrors, however, in 1691 they commenced to pay more for prisoners than for scalps.¹⁷ A direct result of this change in market value was the saving of the lives of many women and children. The men, being active combatants, usually suffered death before capture.¹⁸ Whatever the hardships of the prolonged journey for the captives, their various accounts speak of the hospitality and kindness of the Gallo-Canadians, once the captives reached the borders of the St. Lawrence.¹⁹

Father Arthur J. Riley, in his *Catholicism in New England to 1788*, estimates that 1,196 New England captives were brought to Canada between 1680 and 1760. Of this number at least 250 remained there.²⁰ Quite often a considerable period of time elapsed before prisoners could be ransomed, and small children were baptized and brought up in the Catholic religion.²¹ Others embraced Catholicism voluntarily. Since the Puritan outlook upon life was harsh and gloomy contrasted with the joyful and buoyant life of New France, these captive converts found life among the Canadians very congenial. This was especially true of those who were adopted into Canadian families. Becoming naturalized, some of them inter-married with the French. Consequently, a number

¹⁶ Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 167. The savages treated all prisoners as slaves even as the English who sold their Indian captives into slavery.

¹⁷ Friederici, *op. cit.*, 434.

¹⁸ Sister Mary Leo Clement Fallon, "Early New England Nuns," unpublished doctoral dissertation at Boston College (1936), 16.

¹⁹ John Williams, *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion* (5th edition, 1774), *passim*; John Norton, *Narrative of the Capture and Burning of Fort Massachusetts by the French and Indians* (1870), *passim*. Cf. James Douglas, *New England and New France* (1913), 308.

²⁰ Riley, *op. cit.*, 6, 306 and Appendix E, Tables I, II, III, IV, pp. 346-348.

²¹ The French Catholics of Canada were as anxious for the spread of the faith as the Puritans of New England were determined that their religion should not be contaminated by contact with "popery" or any dissenting sect.—Channing, *op. cit.*, III, 539.

of Canadians today claim descent from New England Puritans.²²

When these captive converts preferred to remain in Canada and could not be prevailed upon to return home,²³ the New Englanders attributed the cause to the proselytizing of the French and their priests. Thus was added to the already existing racial hatred and jealousy caused by territorial expansion a religious antagonism so strong that the Puritans became fearful of contact with Catholics;²⁴ Cotton Mather stressed the teaching of anti-popery in his catechism, and New England made appeals to the provincial government to secure the ransom or release of her subjects before they should be perverted.²⁵ To a historical and geographical accident, therefore, must be attributed the fact that hostility toward everything French became a fundamental American attitude. Especially was this true of the frontier, where "the French, the Catholic, the Devil, and the Indian were alike children of Belial to be hated and destroyed."²⁶

Obviously then a study of Catholic converts must embrace those New Englanders transplanted to Canadian soil, and because history and biography are so closely related, their story can be told only in the light of the times. In his introduction to the *Jesuit Relations* Reuben Gold Thwaites claims that the history of New England cannot be studied apart from the history of New France. Of the captive converts taken to Canada this study will consider only the most representative among their number and those concerning whom it is possible to gather reliable data.

²² Parkman, *Half Century*, I, 88; Riley, *op. cit.*, 163-164; William A. L. Styles, "Puritan Catholics," *The Sign*, XVI (1936), 228.

²³ E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of New York* (1854), IV, 350, and (1858), X, 211-216; *Jesuit Relations* (1900), LXV, 91-93; Emma L. Coleman, *New England Captives Carried to Canada* (1926), I, 79, 116; Herbert L. Osgood, *The American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century* (1924), I, 467. Henry Trumbull, *History of Indian Wars* (1841), 108-125, lists the names of those who preferred life on the St. Lawrence to life in New England.

²⁴ Riley, *op. cit.*, 165. Cf. Samuel Penhallow, *History of the Wars of New England* (1859), 65; John Williams, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

²⁵ Riley, *op. cit.*, 6; C. Alice Baker, "More New England Captives," *History and Proceedings of Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association* (1912), V, 182-197.

²⁶ Howard Mumford Jones, *American and French Culture, 1750-1848* (1927), 80.

CHAPTER II

CAPTIVE CONVERTS IN QUEBEC

The history of the Catholic Church in early New England leads us back to the history of New France. Aside from the fur trade, the whole life of the latter colony was centered in its missions, convents, religious schools and hospitals.¹ Champlain, a Franciscan Tertiary, who founded Quebec, had wished "to plant in the country the standard of the cross, to teach the knowledge of God and the glory of His name, desiring to increase charity for His creatures."² The return of Canada to France, 1632, witnessed a new era of great missionary activity. The Jesuits were given charge of the missions with Father Paul Le Jeune as their superior. Seeing the need for the establishment of schools for Indian children, he began this work at once.³ The Jesuit Fathers believed that the Indian boy in the Jesuit school at Quebec and the Indian girl in the convent school of the Ursulines would have a favorable influence on the natives and cause them to adopt the mode of life of their teachers.⁴ They seemed to have forgotten how long it had taken the pagan world to become Christian. The Indian never did become French, and both Frenchmen and Englishmen who lived in the wilderness often sank to the level of the red man. Even when converted, the Indians were slow to adopt the habits of Christianity.

The plan of the French colonizers also called, not only for schools in civilizing and Christianizing the natives, but also for hospitals to care for the sick. In 1633 Father Paul Le Jeune had written about the double need of the colony, but without result. In 1635 he reported to his provincial that many nuns had ex-

¹ Francis Parkman, *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century* (1872), 157.

² Sister St. Croix Holmes, *Glimpses of the Monastery* (1897), 2; Champlain, *op. cit.* (1922), I, 4-10, and (1929), III, 209-210.

³ Paul Le Jeune, born in France in 1591 of Huguenot parents, had become a Catholic on attaining his majority.—*Jesuit Relations* (1897), V, 275.

⁴ Wrong, *The Canadians*, 102.

pressed to him their desire to devote themselves to the American Mission :

There are so many of these who write to us, and from so many Convents, and from various Orders in the Church, of the strictest discipline that you will say that each one is first to laugh at the hardships of the Sea, the riotous waves of the Ocean, the barbarism of these countries. . . . Alas, my God! if the waste, the superabundance of some of the Ladies of France were employed in this so holy work, what great blessings would it bring down upon their families! Is it possible that earthly possessions are of greater concern to us than life itself? Behold these tender and delicate Virgins all ready to hazard their lives upon the waves of the Ocean, to come seeking little souls in the rigors of an air much colder than that of France, to endure hardships at which even men would be appalled; and will not some brave Lady be found who will give a Passport to these Amazons of the Great God, endowing them with a House in which to praise and serve His divine Majesty in this world. I cannot persuade myself that our Lord will not dispose someone to this act.⁵

As a result of the publication in France of these letters, known as the *Jesuit Relations*, great interest was aroused in the colonial mission field, and princes and prelates, courtiers and ladies, as well as persons of the humbler walks of life, vied with each other in raising funds for the missions and other charitable purposes.⁶ In the performance of the beneficent functions of teaching and nursing the French woman played a very important rôle.⁷ Madeleine de Chauvigny, better known as Madame de la Peltrie, a French widow of comfortable means, offered herself and all she had to found a monastery of Ursulines in the New World for the

⁵ *Jesuit Relations* (1897), VII, 257-261.

⁶ Holmes, *Glimpses*, 48.

⁷ This was in striking contrast to their New England sisters, whose ecclesiastical system provided them no sphere of activity in the social and religious life. The Puritans in throwing off chivalry, whose parent was Catholicism, had replaced it by the Hebrew idea of the subjection and seclusion of women.—Douglas, *op. cit.*, 266-267. Cf. Wrong, *The Canadians*, 67-102; Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America* (1772), II, 214-224, 287.

instruction of little Indian and French girls.⁸ Mother Marie of the Incarnation and Mother St. Bernard, who changed her name to Mother St. Joseph, were chosen from the community of Tours for the undertaking. At Dieppe they were joined by Mother Cecile Richer de la Croix.⁹

The Duchess d'Aiguillon, niece of Cardinal Richelieu, resolved to found and endow the first hospital in North America.¹⁰ She chose for the work the Religious Hospitallers of St. Augustine. When Madame de la Peltrie embarked with her Ursulines for Canada on May 4, 1639, there sailed with them three Hospitallers, Mother Marie Guenet de St. Ignace, as superior, Mother Anne Lecointre de St. Bernard, and Mother Marie Forestier de St. Bonaventure.¹¹ Father Le Jeune in his *Relations* describes the reception accorded the newcomers when they landed in Quebec, August 1, 1639.¹² The Hospital Sisters were established in a temporary home furnished by the Hundred Associates until their hospital could be built at Sillery, a town four miles above Quebec where the Jesuits had established a mission for the Algonquins and the Montagnais converted to Christianity.¹³ The Ursulines at once began their task of teaching. Their monastery became identified with the history of Quebec and at all times shared its fate.

MARY ANN DAVIS OF THE URSULINES

Between 1632 and 1689 there was nominal peace between the French and the English in America. The repercussions from the

⁸ The Ursulines were founded by Angela Merici in 1535. This was the first teaching Order of women to receive Papal approval in modern times.

⁹ Holmes, *Glimpses*, 5-12.

¹⁰ The Duchess had wished to become a religious, but Richelieu had opposed her and brought her to Court.—Henri R. Casgrain, *Histoire de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec* (1878), 30-41. To Cortes belongs the honor of establishing in Mexico the first hospital in the New World. In 1541 a law was passed prescribing that hospitals be built in all the Spanish and Indian towns of Mexico.—William A. L. Styles, "The Hôtel-Dieu of Québec, 1639-1939," *The Magnificat*, LXVI (1940), 186-187.

¹¹ Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 42-47.

¹² *Jesuit Relations* (1898), XVI, 19.

¹³ Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 96.

mother countries, however, were destined to draw the colonies of all the powers into the coming conflict. Before the formal declaration of war between the French and English in 1689 the Abnaki Indians had renewed hostilities against the English settlers, who were ever more and more encroaching on their land. Drake says their attack was the direct result of English aggression.¹⁴ Others maintain that the French goaded on their allies.¹⁵ During one of the raids Mary Ann Davis was captured. Her genealogy will probably never be solved. The only source of information concerning her is found in the community archives of the Ursulines of Quebec. Their annals say that the child was hardly six years old when in 1686 she saw her parents massacred and herself taken captive at Salem, Massachusetts.¹⁶

According to the Ursuline records Mary Ann Davis was conveyed by the Indians into the depths of the hunting territories of the Abnaki on the borders of the Penobscot River. Here she was treated by the old chief as one of his own daughters, and in the midst of the red men she grew up joyful, innocent, and carefree. When she was about fifteen years old, Father Sebastian Rale, S.J.,

¹⁴ Drake, *op. cit.*, 9. It is well known that an Indian never forgets or forgives an injury. During King Philip's War, Waldron (Waldern) of Dover, New Hampshire, had been commissioned by the General Court of Massachusetts to make a treaty with the Abnaki Indians of Maine. War being ended, about two hundred of the Indians had come to Dover to trade with the white man. Waldron proposed a sham battle between the whites and the reds. During the skirmish the unsuspecting Indians were seized and sold into slavery. For the English side, see Jeremy Belknap, *History of New Hampshire*, edited by John Farmer (1812), I, 111-119; for Catholic account, Shea, "The Catholic Question in New England," *op. cit.*, 216-228.

¹⁵ Penhallow, *op. cit.*, 46; Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1853), II, 626-628.

¹⁶ *Les Ursulines de Québec* (1878), II, 411-412; Holmes, *Glimpses*, 182-183. The Ursuline Annals place her capture at Salem, Massachusetts, but other documents say it was at Oyster Bay, now Durham, New Hampshire, July 18, 1694. Cf. Fallon, *op. cit.*, 51-53; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 268-269; Mary P. Thompson, "The Catholic Church in New Hampshire," *Catholic World*, LII (1890), 177-180. Could Mary Ann Davis have been captured at the sack of Dover, June 27, 1689? There is no record, however, of any Davis taken at that time.

missionary to the Abnaki, instructed her.¹⁷ Having baptized her conditionally, he found a powerful friend for her in the person of Philippe de Rigaud, the Marquis of Vaudreuil, who had succeeded Frontenac in 1703 as Governor General of New France, and who held this position until his death in 1725. Mary Ann was placed as a boarder in the convent of the Ursulines in 1698. At her entrance she exclaimed: "This is the house of Jesus; here I will live and die."¹⁸ At school she showed a particular aptitude for needlework and the study of foreign languages, making astonishing progress in Algonquin.¹⁹ After one year at boarding school Mary Ann asked admittance into the congregation of the Ursulines. She entered the novitiate, September 14, 1699. After two years of probation, as Sister Mary Benedict she made her profession, September 25, 1701. Mary Ann was the second English-speaking girl of American birth and residence to embrace the religious life in Quebec.²⁰ She served her community for nearly half a century,

¹⁷ Sebastian Rale had sailed for Canada, July 23, 1689, on the same ship with Count de Frontenac, who was returning to Canada for his second term as governor. At first Father Rale labored in the Indian villages near Quebec. In 1691 he was transferred to the Abnaki mission on the Kennebec River, Maine. Here he worked until his death, 1724.—T. J. Campbell, *Pioneer Priests of North America* (1911), III, 265-308; Convers Francis, *Life of Sebastien Râle* (1845), *passim*. For impartial treatment see H. C. Schuyler, "The Apostle of the Abnaki: Father Sebastian Râle, S.J., 1657-1724," *Catholic Historical Review* [hereafter referred to as *C. H. R.*], II (1915), 164-174; also his article in the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society* [hereafter referred to as *Records*], XVIII (1907), 121-154, 306-354.

¹⁸ Holmes, *Glimpses*, 183.

¹⁹ Fallon, *op. cit.*, 49.

²⁰ Mary Ann Davis was the first Ursuline of English descent in the monastery of Quebec. Miss Gertrude Larkin in "The First New England Nuns," in the *Historical Records and Studies* [hereafter referred to as *H. R. S.*], XXIX (1938), 50, says that Mary Ann Davis was the first native nun. Styles characterized her as such in his "Puritan Catholics," *op. cit.*, 227, but he corrected his error in his later article, "Pioneer American Nuns," *Ave Maria*, LV (February 7, 1942), 168. Present researches reveal Lydia Longley (Sister St. Magdaleine of the Hospitallers) to have been the first nun from New England.—*Infra*, 38. The first English-speaking religious in the New World was Mary Irwin, a young Scottish emigré from France, whose family had espoused the Stuart cause. Coming to Quebec she entered the Hôtel-Dieu community in 1642. She was known as Sister Mary Ann of the Conception.—Styles, "Pioneer American Nuns," 167.

fulfilling joyfully the duties which obedience enjoined. The charge she most enjoyed was that of sacristan, which she held for many years. After a strongly resisted illness of five months' duration when she was in her seventieth year, Mary Ann Davis died March 2, 1749.²¹

ESTHER WHEELWRIGHT

Though the early life of Mary Ann Davis (Sister Mary Benedict) is clouded in obscurity, the life of Esther Wheelwright is well known. A great granddaughter of the Puritan divine, John Wheelwright,²² Esther was captured, 1703, during one of the Abnaki raids upon Wells, Maine.²³ One of the eleven children

²¹ *Les Ursulines*, II, 515.

²² John Wheelwright, expelled in 1636 from his parish in England by Archbishop Laud, emigrated to this country. Because he supported his sister-in-law, Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, in the Antinomian controversy, he was disfranchised and banished from Massachusetts. The Antinomian controversy had historical significance because it committed Massachusetts to a strict religious conformity.—Charles Francis Adams, *Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay* (1894), 15, and his *Three Episodes of Massachusetts History* (1893), 363-581; Caleb Snow, *History of Boston* (1828), 69-81. Wheelwright moved from the region and in April, 1638, bought land from the Indians at what is now Exeter, New Hampshire.—Charles H. Bell, *History of the Town of Exeter* (1888), 5-10. Here a community developed, but as Massachusetts extended her jurisdiction to include the new settlement, Wheelwright, in the spring of 1643, found himself compelled to abandon that place. He next settled at Wells, Maine.—Charles H. Bell, *John Wheelwright* (1876), 9. In 1644 his banishment was revoked and he left Wells to engage in ministerial work elsewhere.—Edmund March Wheelwright, *A Frontier Family* (1894), 11-15. His descendants, however, continued to figure prominently in the history of Wells. His grandson, John Wheelwright, by his prudence, energy, fidelity, and bravery became known as "the bulwark of Massachusetts for his defense against Indian assaults."—Baker, *True Stories*, 42. Massachusetts in the meantime had extended her jurisdiction over Maine, but the government was so penurious that the safety of Wells depended upon the Wheelwrights, the Littlefields, and Storers.—Malcolm Storer, *Annals of the Storer Family* (1927), 30.

²³ The Treaty of Ryswick (1697) proved only a truce, and in 1703 war broke out again between France and England. Again the outer settlements, particularly those in Maine and New Hampshire, were the chief sufferers.—W. W. Clayton, *History of York, Maine* (1880), 49.

of John Wheelwright and Mary Snell,²⁴ she was about seven years old when the Indians carried her off into their forest home near the source of the Kennebec. Two years later when Samuel Hill, who had also been captured, was sent on parole to Boston to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, there was no news of Esther.²⁵ For five years she led the life of a savage. Towards the end of that period Father Vincent Bigot, S.J.,²⁶ discovered her. Recognizing that the child must be of a different race, he addressed her in English. She did not respond. The savage who had adopted her revealed to the missionary the girl's origin and parents. Father Bigot carried on negotiations with the Indians to transfer her to Canada, but they refused to give up their ward. He continued to visit the tribe and profited by his meetings with the young captive to instruct her. Soon she knew the catechism in French as well as in the Abnaki language. Father Bigot informed the Marquis de Vaudreuil, Governor General of Canada, of this extraordinary case. The Governor redeemed her and received her into his own household.²⁷ He must have told the English about the child, for Lieutenant Josiah Littlefield, who had been captured, April 23, 1708, and brought to Montreal, wrote to his children on June 23:

I have liberty granted to me to rite to my friends, and to the governor, for my redemption and for Wheelrite's child to be redeemed by two Indens prisoners that are with the English now, and I have been with the Governor this morning, and hee have promised that if our governor will send them that wee shall be redeemed, for the governor have sent a man to redeem Wheelerites child, and do looks for him in now every day with the child to Moriel [Montreal] where I am, and would pray Whilrite to be very brief in the matter, that we may come home

²⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 425.

²⁵ Baker, *True Stories*, 49; Lionel St. George Lindsay, "Mère Wheelwright," *Bulletin des recherches historiques*, V (1899), 165.

²⁶ The brother Jesuits, James and Vincent Bigot, spent their lives among the Abnaki Indians. They labored at the missions at St. Francis de Sales on the Chaudière and also at the two mission centers on the Kennebec and the Penobscot rivers in Maine.—Camille de Rochemonteix, *Les Jesuites et la Nouvelle-France* (1896), III, 226.

²⁷ Lindsay, "Mère Wheelright," 166.

before winter, for we must come by Albany, and I have also acquainted our gofneer Dedley [Dudley] with the same.²⁸

Five months elapsed before Wheelwright could send an Indian boy to be exchanged for Esther. In the meantime Father Bigot had taken the child to Quebec instead of bringing her to Montreal as Littlefield had expected.²⁹ Littlefield was not released from captivity until the autumn of 1709, but since there was no mode of transportation home, his freedom would have been no great boon to him.³⁰ On January 18, 1709, Esther and the daughter of Vaudreuil were confided to the care of the Ursulines at Quebec, as Madame la Marquise Vaudreuil was recalled to France to be assistant governess for the royal children. The register states that the governor paid the modern equivalent of forty dollars to the school for Esther in 1709, but on July 18, 1710, the Jesuit superior is listed as paying her tuition.³¹ As Esther wished to become a nun, Vaudreuil, in opposition to her desire, brought her back to his chateau in 1711. According to a Wheelwright tradition one of the sons of the Governor wished to marry her.³²

Baker claims that Vaudreuil made no effort to restore Esther to her parents.³³ In June, 1711, however, Vaudreuil had written to Dudley from Montreal as follows:

Mr. Wheelwright's daughter being no longer considered a prisoner, I only want a safe and fit opportunity to send her back although she does not wish to return. As her brother speaks French, he can, with a passport from you come to seek her, and it will not be my fault if he does not take her back. I will give him every possible

²⁸ Edward E. Bourne, *History of Wells and Kennebunk* (1875), 267-268. *Les Ursulines*, II, 77, states that, as soon as Father Bigot found Esther, he sent a deposition to New England, but Coleman (*op. cit.*, I, 427) found no record of its having been received.

²⁹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 269.

³⁰ Bourne, *op. cit.*, 269.

³¹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 426. That same year Esther asked to be made a French subject. There is no record that her request was granted, either on the list of 1710 or on that of 1713.

³² *Ibid.*, I, 427.

³³ Baker, *True Stories*, 52.

help, and this change of her religion shall not be strong enough to oblige me to keep her.³⁴

Was Vaudreuil seeking that opportunity when he took Esther to Three Rivers, where she stayed with the Ursulines, and to Montreal where she was the guest of the Hôtel-Dieu?³⁵ Again negotiations failed to materialize. This is not surprising in view of the state of affairs prevailing between New England and New France at this time. New Englanders had planned a formidable expedition against New France in 1700. A land contingent aided by the Indians was to be sent by way of Lake Champlain to Montreal while a naval fleet from England in conjunction with recruits from Boston was to attack Quebec.³⁶ Since the English fleet did not actually appear at Boston until 1710, these plans could not be carried out, but the fleet succeeded in capturing Port Royal. The following year Walker and Hill were ordered to sail up the Saint Lawrence and take Quebec while Nicholson was to make another attempt against Montreal. Early in August Vaudreuil was warned of the mighty preparations at Boston against Quebec and the proposed attack against Montreal.³⁷ The naval expedition against Quebec being a fiasco, the attack upon Montreal was abandoned.³⁸

In the meantime the governor, yielding to the importunities of Esther, had permitted her to join the Ursulines. On October 21, 1712, she commenced her novitiate. After the Treaty of

³⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 427, quoting from Canadian Archives, Correspondence General, XXXII, 119-123.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 427. At Montreal in October, 1711, Esther was sponsor for Abigail Stebbins' child, Dorathée de Noyon.

³⁶ Channing, *op. cit.*, II, 542.

³⁷ Parkman, *Half Century*, I, 178, taken from "Vaudreuil au Ministre, 25 October 1711"; Father Mareuil, deceived by Schuyler was exchanged for Colonel Peter Schuyler's nephew. During his captivity Father Mareuil was well treated and allowed to visit New York City occasionally. He learned of the preparations that were going on for the invasion of Canada. On his return he informed Vaudreuil of what he had learned and observed.—Campbell, *op. cit.*, I, 330. Cf. O'Callaghan, *Documents* (1855), IX, 828, 836, 842, 847, 856.

³⁸ Parkman, *Half Century*, I, 171-175; Channing, *op. cit.*, II, 542-543; Wrong, *The Canadians*, 142-144.

Utrecht, April 11, 1713,³⁹ Major John Stoddard, the Reverend John Williams, Captain Baker, and others left for Canada in order to arrange for a general exchange of prisoners.⁴⁰ The Ursuline Annals state that after Esther's entrance into religion word was sent to her family of the step she had taken.⁴¹ The envoy brought her letters from her family—apparently the first she had received—urging her to return home.⁴² Fearing that they might attempt to force her against her will, Esther asked that the time of her novitiate be shortened. To this the bishop and the governor assented. Thus it happened that on April 12, 1714, when according to French laws she became of age, Esther Wheelwright, as Sister Mary Joseph of the Infant Jesus, pronounced her vows in the presence of the Marquis de Vaudreuil and the elite of Quebec.⁴³

Although New England and New France were nominally at peace between 1713 and 1744,⁴⁴ there was little communication between them during these years. No correspondence between Sister Mary Joseph and her family is known to have existed during this period. Her father, in making his will in 1739, wrote:

I give and bequeath to my daughter Esther Wheelwright, if living in Canada whom I have not heard of for many years and hath been absent for more than thirty years if it should please God that She should return to this country and settle here, then my will is that my four sons . . . each of them pay her Twenty Five pounds . . . within six months after her Return and Settlement.⁴⁵

³⁹ Frances Gardiner Davenport, ed., *European Treaties* (1934), III, 219.

⁴⁰ "Stoddard's Journal," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, V (1851), 22. The commission arrived in Quebec February 16, 1714, and remained several months.—*Ibid.*, 26-34.

⁴¹ *Les Ursulines*, II, 103.

⁴² Fallon, *op. cit.*, 101. Cf. Baker, *True Stories*, 56.

⁴³ *Les Ursulines*, II, 89-90; Holmes, *Glimpses*, 181; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 427. The shortening of the probation period for Esther Wheelwright was probably the first and last time such an exception was made. Father Bigot, her friend and rescuer, delivered the sermon on the occasion of her profession. It was he who had paid the dowry of thirty-five hundred francs at the time of her entrance.—Fallon, *op. cit.*, 114.

⁴⁴ Indian warfare continued in Maine until the English slew Father Rale, August, 1724.

⁴⁵ William M. Sargeant, *Maine Wills, 1640-1760* (1887), 525.

John Wheelwright died in 1745, but evidently Esther did not know of it until 1747 when she wrote to her mother expressing sympathy and love and explained to her the impossibility of returning home since she had consecrated herself to God.⁴⁶ This the mother could not understand, and when she made her will in 1750, Esther was to be provided for:

... if my beloved Daughter Esther Wheelwright who has been many years in Canada is yet living and should by the Wonder working Providence of God be returned to Native Land and tarry and dwell in it I Give and bequeath unto her one-fifth of my estate.⁴⁷

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748, brought a cessation of hostilities, but Esther was not heard from again until the Seven Years' War. In 1754 Major Nathaniel Wheelwright, nephew to Esther, was sent to Canada concerning the exchange of prisoners. He went to visit his aunt at the monastery.⁴⁸ The interview was most cordial, and he wrote in his journal a description of his visit.⁴⁹ At a later date he wrote that he went often to visit his aunt. On one occasion he gave to her a portrait of his mother and to the community a silver flagon, a beautiful silver service which bore the family arms, and some fine linen.⁵⁰ Esther again, 1761, had the pleasure of a visit from one of her relatives, her sister's son, Joshua Moody. On this occasion she sent presents to her little namesake, Esther, her sister's granddaughter. She also gave the family her own portrait.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 429-431. This letter was translated by William Smith and sent under a flag of truce. Letter in full in Fallon, *op. cit.*, 103-104.

⁴⁷ Sargeant, *op. cit.*, 771.

⁴⁸ *Les Ursulines*, II, 327; Lindsay, "Mère Wheelwright," V, 169. Cf. O'Callaghan, *Documents*, X, 252.

⁴⁹ "Journal of the Proceedings of Nathaniel Wheelwright," January 26, 1753, 29-30. The manuscript was given by Jeremy Belknap to the Massachusetts Historical Society when it was organized in 1791.

⁵⁰ *Les Ursulines*, II, 327; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 431-432.

⁵¹ Holmes, *Glimpses*, 308, Note 1; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 433. Mother Esther asked that little Esther be educated by the Ursuline nuns, but this request was refused.

When the siege of Quebec by the English army and navy began, July 12, 1759, all but eight of the Sisters at the Ursuline monastery took refuge at the General Hospital, which lay beyond the walls of the city.⁵² Esther may have been, as Miss Baker asserted, one of those who remained in the besieged town to look after the interests of her community.⁵³ On December 15, 1760, she was elected Mother Superior to succeed Mother Migeon.⁵⁴ It may not be amiss to conjecture that one of the reasons why Mother Esther (Sister Mary Joseph) was chosen was her ability to treat with the English during the critical years that lay ahead. As the annalist notes, it was a coincidence that a superior bearing an English name was placed at the helm of government in the community at the same time that English rule was being inaugurated.⁵⁵

After the capitulation of Quebec, September 17, 1759, the British forces under the command of General James Murray entered the city the following day.⁵⁶ General Murray at once gave orders for repairing five hundred houses damaged during the siege.

⁵² *Les Ursulines*, II, 381; Lindsay, "Mère Wheelwright," 169. The General Hospital had been founded by Bishop St. Vallier, 1692, who confided the direction of the hospital to the Religious Hospitallers of Quebec. Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 561-562.

⁵³ Baker, *True Stories*, 61. Fallon, *op. cit.*, says that Esther was among the number privileged to remain. Another article, "Esther Wheelwright," by Arline Genereaux, appearing in *The Eikon*, XII (1939), 41, has her with her sister religious seeking safety at the General Hospital. This is more probably correct according to Sister St. Joseph, archivist of the Ursuline Monastery at Quebec, who thinks that the Sisters over sixty years of age were sent to the General Hospital. If Mother Esther was among the number who remained at the Ursuline monastery, then she was present that evening of September 14, when the body of Montcalm was brought and buried in the Ursuline chapel. Holmes, *Glimpses*, 275, 276, has a description of the burial of Montcalm.

⁵⁴ Mother Migeon's term of office had expired, December 15, 1759, but because of her acceptability to the conquerors, an extension of one year was granted by the ecclesiastical authority, M. Briand, Vicar General of the diocese.—*Les Ursulines*, III, 20, Note 1.

⁵⁵ Holmes, *Glimpses*, 307.

⁵⁶ Reuben Gold Thwaites, *France in America* (1933), 254; George M. Wrong, *The Fall of Canada* (1914), 47-48. For distress in Quebec during these years see Garneau, *op. cit.*, II, 178-317.

The Ursuline monastery was repaired and there, October 4, the General quartered many of his wounded soldiers.⁵⁷ The first and second floors were given over to the soldiers, and the nuns, who had now been rejoined by those from the General Hospital, occupied the third floor.⁵⁸ They devoted themselves to the task of nursing the sick, even being able to furnish the wounded with little delicacies. As the winter was unusually severe and the kilted regiment of Highlanders particularly suffered from exposure, the nuns wove for them long woolen hose.⁵⁹ Even in those troubled days the community found leisure for fine needlework, and in compliment to Murray's Scottish nationality, the Sisters on St. Andrew's day presented him and some other officers with a set of crosses curiously worked. Captains McDonnell and Barbutt of the regiments were so touched by this kindness that they were attentive to the needs of the community. Not only did the commissary department furnish the Sisters their daily supplies, but the convalescent soldiers cut their wood, carried their water, and shoveled snow to make a path for them.⁶⁰

Meantime Governor Vaudreuil, son of the Marquis de Vaudreuil who had befriended Esther, had retired to Montreal. He and General Levis, who had succeeded Montcalm, were resolved to descend upon Quebec to regain possession of the town. In the latter part of April they appeared before the British outposts at St. Foy. General Murray had expelled, May 21, all the French inhabitants of the city for fear of having to deal with a foe from within. He kept the nuns, however, to nurse his soldiers. On April 28 Murray sallied forth to meet the enemy on the Plains of Abraham. He was defeated and withdrew into the city. On May 11, the siege of Quebec began, and it had lasted five days when a newly arrived English fleet forced the French to withdraw to Montreal.⁶¹ The British now planned to capture Montreal, the

⁵⁷ *Les Ursulines*, III, 17.

⁵⁸ Wrong, *The Fall of Canada*, 68. In one of the wings of the building Murray held meetings with his council; the chapel was used twice a week for Protestant services. It also served as a parish church until December 24, 1764.—*Les Ursulines*, III, 19, 44, 48.

⁵⁹ Wrong, *The Fall of Canada*, 69; *Les Ursulines*, III, 19.

⁶⁰ *Les Ursulines*, III, 19; Holmes, *Glimpses*, 282-283.

⁶¹ *Les Ursulines*, III, 23-25; Thwaites, *France in America*, 258-259; Francis Parkman, *Wolfe and Montcalm* (1884), II, 335-357.

last stronghold of the French. The soldiers apparently did not leave the Ursuline convent until about June, 1760.⁶² On their withdrawal Murray ordered that no more provisions be furnished the nuns except for ready money. This caused consternation, for the Sisters could not subsist without aid. Mother Migeon of the Nativity wrote to General Murray explaining their dilemma. Murray thereupon ordered the commissary to continue the issuance of supplies to the community.⁶³

On September 8, 1760, the capitulation of Montreal was signed. Freedom of the Catholic religion was assured, and the communities of nuns were given special protection.⁶⁴ Since the treaty of peace was not signed, however, until February 10, 1763, the ensuing years were filled with uncertainty. The Ursuline annals reveal the anxiety of those days. Mother Esther, who, as it has been noted, had on December 15, 1760, been named to the responsible position of Mother Superior, wrote: "They have just announced to us that peace is made and that this poor country is returned to France. I hope it may be so."⁶⁵ Her letters during this period show her to be a resourceful and courageous woman while tender and compassionate of others. In a letter to the Procurator of the Ursulines, R. P. de Launay, in Paris, May, 1761, she described their situation:

. . . It is true that notwithstanding our misfortune we need not lack the necessaries of life if one had plenty of money, but we have only what we earn by our birch bark work. As long as this is the fashion the money we earn by it is a great help to our support, because we sell it at a high price to the English gentlemen, yet they seem to consider it a privilege to buy, so eager are they for our work. It is really impossible for us notwithstanding our industry to supply the demand.

Then she spoke of their debts to the English government, saying that they were large ones, but she added, "Nobody but myself,

⁶² Holmes, *Glimpses*, 286, Note 1.

⁶³ *Les Ursulines*, III, 40-41; Baker, *True Stories*, 63.

⁶⁴ Wrong, *The Fall of Canada*, 224; *Les Ursulines*, III, 38. Amherst, who became Governor General, would promise nothing in regard to the privileges of the Jesuits, the Sulpicians, and the Récollets.

⁶⁵ *Les Ursulines*, III, 361.

however, knows about them, and I am in no hurry to acquaint our community for fear of distressing them."⁶⁶

Soon after, she received the bill from the commissary for provisions furnished the community from October 4, 1759, to May 25, 1761. The amount was \$1,352.46. Mother Esther wrote to Murray, now Governor of Quebec, stating the inability of the nuns to pay the debt thus contracted. At the same time she put at the disposal of the government certain community lands. She continued :

Nous espérons cependant, Monsieur, que sur la représentation que vous voudrez bien faire pour nous en cette occasion, Sa Majesté ne pourra refuser de vous remettre cette somme entièrement ou en partie. C'est dans cette confiance que nous avons dans les bontés dont vous nous avez donné jusqu'ici les marques les plus sensibles que nous vous assurons de notre parfaite reconnaissance, et du respect avec lequel j'ai l'Honneur d'être, . . .

Governor Murray promised to take up the matter with George III. In the interval of suspense Mother Esther wrote to the Paris community and told them that the Sisters would try for some years to do without many things in order to pay their debt.⁶⁷ Toward the end of the year, 1762, the community was reassured by the following communication from Governor Murray :

Madame,—J'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer la traduction d'une lettre que je viens de recevoir au sujet des rations fournies à votre communauté, qui vous mettra au fait de l'état de cette affaire. Mais je crois pourvoir vous assurer que le remboursement n'en sera point exigé, que vous ne soyez bien en état d'y satisfaire. . . .⁶⁸

Murray became Governor of Canada, November 21, 1763. He had come to realize that the Catholic Church was his most effective aid in securing the allegiance of the people. As Governor of Quebec he had urged the British government to rebuild the ruined

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Les Ursulines*, III, 42; Baker, *True Stories*, 64.

⁶⁸ *Les Ursulines*, III, 42.

cathedral and to encourage the religious communities.⁶⁹ This attitude of friendliness towards the French inhabitants occasioned his recall in 1766, for the British settlers accused him of showing partiality toward the conquered population.⁷⁰ His good will, expressed in letters still extant, continued towards the Ursulines. Writing to them from London, April 23, 1767, he thanked them for their gifts of handiwork and assured them of his lasting esteem, gratitude, and friendship.⁷¹

Mother Esther was reëlected superior in 1763, and the next year her golden jubilee was fittingly celebrated by the community to whom she had endeared herself by her fervor and fidelity to all the duties of the monastic life. In learning to obey she had learned to command. With forbearance and gentleness, blended with the most charming manners, she had not failed to win the love and obedience of her subordinates. Her happy disposition and sweet temper made her example more eloquent than her precepts.⁷² She had gained also the esteem of her conquerors, as has been seen. On the recall of Governor James Murray his successor, Sir Guy Carleton (Lord Dorchester), and Lady Carleton became friends of the community, their daughter becoming a pupil at the convent school. Lady Carleton was most cordial and intimate with the Sisters.⁷³ At first Carleton had been suspicious

⁶⁹ Wrong, *The Fall of Canada*, 258-259.

⁷⁰ H. M. Chickestner, "James Murray," *Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter referred to as *D.N.B.*], (1937-1938), XII, 1217. Murray was freed of the charge by the House of Lords.

⁷¹ *Les Ursulines*, III, 42.

⁷² Holmes, *Glimpses*, 308; Lindsay, "Mère Wheelwright," V, 171; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 434; Baker, *True Stories*, 65.

⁷³ *Les Ursulines*, III, 150-152; 180-184; Holmes, *Glimpses*, 312. Before and after each European voyage Lady Carleton visited the nuns. On one of these occasions, accompanied by her three little sons and a daughter, she presented the mother superior with two silver candlesticks for the church. In 1784 she sent her eldest daughter to the convent to learn French and embroidery. She herself accompanied her that she might perfect herself in the language while listening to the instructions. It was through her influence and at the request of the governor that the nuns consented to admit, as a parlor boarder, a relative of the family, Mrs. Johnson, while her husband was in London. In 1787 the favor was again granted to the widow of a Major Carleton, Lady Anne. The latter would have wished to remain permanently, but to this the nuns could not consent; so she returned to England.

of the Canadians, but he found them faithful and good subjects.⁷⁴ In fact, he was largely responsible for the passage of the Quebec Act.⁷⁵ Did his pleasant relations with Bishop Briand, the Ursulines and other religious Orders, influence his liberality in that Act?

All through these years Mother Esther had been playing a conspicuous part. The rule of her Order not permitting a third consecutive term, she gave up the reins of government in 1766, but was again elected in 1769. Because of her declining health the Sisters did not think she would live to see the election of 1772, but she recovered and was made assistant for the ensuing six years. In 1778 she became zelatrix, which position she held until her death in 1780.⁷⁶ Ever helpful, but particularly during the years of penury and distress Mother Esther exerted her skill in embroidery and other fancy work in order to contribute to the support of her community. When her eyesight failed, so that she could no longer do fine embroidery, she mended the undergarments of her Sisters.⁷⁷

The community was still struggling with poverty in 1775 when Quebec was besieged by the American colonials.⁷⁸ As has been said before, Mother Esther was at the time the first assistant of her community. For the second time she saw the country of her adoption on the verge of desolation and ruin. Montreal had fallen, November 3, 1775, before an army of Americans under General Montgomery. Arnold had occupied the Heights of Abraham, November 12, and laid siege to the city for nearly a month while waiting for Montgomery to join him. Together they made the assault which ended in failure for the

⁷⁴ Sir Guy Carleton Dorchester, *Condition of the Indian Trade in North America in 1767* (1890), 9; Auguste Gosselin, *L'Eglise du Canada après la conquête* (1916), *passim*.

⁷⁵ George F. R. Barker, "Guy Carleton Dorchester," *D.N.B.* (1937-1938), III, 1002-1003.

⁷⁶ *Les Ursulines*, III, 365; Baker, *True Stories*, 67. The office of zelatrix is the position of second assistant which office is now designated by the name of admonitrix.

⁷⁷ *Les Ursulines*, III, 363-364; Holmes, *Glimpses*, 309.

⁷⁸ Holmes, *Glimpses*, 303-305.

Americans, though the siege continued until May, 1776.⁷⁹ Although her earthly career was drawing to a close, Mother Esther could not have remained indifferent to the fate of her community during those eventful days, for she was one of the most beautiful ornaments and one of the staunchest supporters of her Order.⁸⁰

Her memory was destined to live, not only in the annals of the Ursulines, but also among future generations of her family, for on November 28, 1930, the Wheelwright family placed beside the entrance to the cloister a marble tablet bearing an inscription in French, the English translation of which reads:

To the Venerable Memory of
Mother Esther Wheelwright
Called Mary Joseph of the Infant Jesus
Superior of This Monastery
At the Time of the Conquest
1760-1766 and 1769-1772
Who Died in 1780 at the Age of 82 Years
67 Years of Religious Life
Souvenir of the Wheelwright Family, E. W.

Nov. 28th, 1930.⁸¹

DOROTHY JORDAN

Mrs. Susannah Johnson in the story of her captivity in Canada tells of her visit to the Ursuline Convent to see the little Phipps girls who were held as captives.⁸² She saw there "two aged English ladies who had been taken in former wars." One of them

⁷⁹ Justin Smith, *Our Struggle for the Fourteenth Colony* (1902), I, 196-197. Cf. Jared Sparks, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* (1834), III, 264.

⁸⁰ *Les Ursulines*, II, 48.

⁸¹ Courtesy of the Ursulines of Quebec. The initials are for Edmund Wheelwright.

⁸² Mrs. Johnson had been captured at Charlestown in the Province of New Hampshire in August, 1754; Polly and Submit Phipps at Hinsdale, Massachusetts. Mrs. Johnson stated that they were beautiful girls, cheerful, and well taught.—Susannah Johnson Hastings, *A Narrative of the Captivity of Mrs. Johnson* (1814), 24-27, 88-90, 127. For Submit Phipps see Riley, *op. cit.*, 280, 294, 362, 363, 366, 371, who merely mentions Mary Phipps, 358, 362, 368.

was Mother Esther with whom she talked and who requested her to visit her brother when she returned home. Mrs. Johnson fails to mention the name of the second sister, but it can hardly be doubted that it was Dorothy Jordon or Dorothée Jeryn, as the French gallicized the name.⁸³ The records concerning Miss Jordan are meager. Captured in the vicinity of Massachusetts Bay, when she was about four years old, Dorothy Jordon lived with the Indians until she was eighteen. Father Rale, who discovered her, begged the Indians to relinquish her, but the chief-tain assured him he cared for her as for a daughter.⁸⁴ Seeing the futility of trying to redeem her just then, he taught the child her catechism and baptized her. Later she must have been taken to the mission at St. Francis, near Sorel, as Father Rale recommends particularly the care of Dorothée Jeryn to Father Aubery, superior of the mission.⁸⁵

Dorothy had heard the Indians speak of the *filles vierges* of the Hôtel-Dieu and the Ursuline Monastery. She desired to be an Ursuline and to devote her life to the instruction of the little Abnakian children. Father Aubery, appreciating the beauty of her soul and the sincerity of her resolve, succeeded in arranging with the Indians that she should leave them when eighteen,⁸⁶ at which time he placed her in a French family that she might learn the language and the customs of civilized people. He himself gave her lessons in French, writing, and arithmetic. Her progress was so slow, however, that when he brought her to the Ursuline convent, the Mother Superior would not receive her. Whereupon, Father Aubery placed her in the Hôtel-Dieu and applied himself anew each day to her instruction. When a second time he presented her to the Mother Superior, he met with success, for the latter having due regard for Dorothy's good will, admitted her into the monastery.⁸⁷

⁸³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 432.

⁸⁴ *Les Ursulines*, II, 173-174.

⁸⁵ Joseph Aubery, S.J., ordained in 1700, was assigned to the mission on the St. John's River. In 1708, he was given charge of the reduction of St. Francis on the Richelieu River. Here he exercised his apostolate for nearly half a century—*Jesuit Relations* (1900), LXVI, 344; Rochemonteix, *op. cit.*, III, 436.

⁸⁶ *Les Ursulines*, II, 175-176.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 176, 358-359; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 389.

On the reception of the habit she became known as Sister Marie Dorothée of St. Joseph. After her profession, January 20, 1722, she was given charge of the linen. The hopes that had been entertained of her usefulness were fully justified. She was a person of character, and her sole ambition was to become a perfect religious and to serve the community the best she could.⁸⁸ During the siege of Quebec she was one of those forced to seek safety beyond the walls of the bombarded city. Her community had become for her a second home, and she feared the conqueror would become the persecutor of her order. During these two months of exile, her health failed, because no doubt of the privations to which the religious were subjected. On September 13, 1759, she was found exceedingly ill, and the next day, which marked the downfall of French government in Canada, she died, fortified by the rites of the Catholic Church.⁸⁹

MARY ANN DAVIS OF THE HOTEL-DIEU

Though the Hospitallers remained in Quebec until their hospital was ready for them at Sillery,⁹⁰ they were kept busy tending the sick and learning the English language. After moving to Sillery, during the fall and winter of 1640 and 1641, they cared for over a hundred patients afflicted with smallpox.⁹¹ The Sisters not only nursed the Indians, but also taught them the catechism and prayers. Consequently, they became a power for good in the settlement. Because of disease and ever-recurring Indian attacks the nuns were kept busy since they administered to French and Indian alike. Three additional nuns arrived for the hospital in 1647.⁹² In the early part of the eighteenth century they began to

⁸⁸ *Les Ursulines*, II, 430; Holmes, *Glimpses*, 184.

⁸⁹ *Les Ursulines*, II, 430; Holmes, *Glimpses*, 184. Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 390.

⁹⁰ *Supra*, 10.

⁹¹ Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 82-86. Cf. *Jesuit Relations* (1898), XXIV, 157-161. The hospital was opened at Sillery, but it was removed to Quebec, 1644, after an attack by the Iroquois. The authorities were afraid the Indians might succeed in their threat of carrying off *les Filles-blanches*.—Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 132-138.

⁹² Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 166-179; *Jesuit Relations* (1898), XXXII, 133-135.

receive Canadian girls into their novitiate. There also entered a Mary Ann Davis of New England parentage. It is with her that this narrative is concerned.

Unfortunately everything regarding her birth and early childhood is based on conjecture.⁹³ The only authentic source of information is the community annals. Herein is learned that the child, half dead with fright, was brought back with several others to the Indian village of Saint Francis of the Lake after one of the Indian raids on New England. There had been a large migration of Abnaki to Canada from Maine about 1690. As the mission at Sillery was not large enough to take care of so many, a new mission called St. François-de-Sales was established at the falls of Chaudière. The priests, Jacques and Vincent Bigot, were accustomed to send their converts to Maine in order to invite their compatriots to join them.⁹⁴ Father Vincent Bigot, who was in charge of the mission, was touched with compassion for the little girl. Taking her under his protection, he confided her to an Abnaki family. As the child grew up, he noticed in her a certain nobility of character, combined with innocence of heart. Thereupon, he himself began to teach her the French language and the rudiments of learning. Quiet and pensive, she loved solitude. From the borders of the lake she would gather iris and water lilies and violets to decorate the chapel. Since the child's devotion was beyond the ordinary, Father Bigot felt she had a call to the religious life. Each time he went to Quebec and visited the Sisters at the Hôtel-Dieu, he would tell them about the English girl, her virtues, and the signs of a vocation he discovered in her.

Mary Ann had been leading this life among the Indians for fourteen years when one day she made her appearance at the hospital and with grace and naiveté asked to be admitted to the Order. She was accepted first as a "pensionnaire" that she might be instructed sufficiently and taught to speak French well.⁹⁵ On

⁹³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 268. Cf. Mary P. Thompson, "The Catholic Church in New Hampshire," *op. cit.*, 180.

⁹⁴ Fallon, *op. cit.*, 75.

⁹⁵ At this time the Hospitallers admitted boarders that they might form and instruct them. This custom was discontinued in the eighteenth century.

January 4, 1710, she entered the community ; on July 7 of the same year she received the veil of a novice and became known as Sister Davis of Ste. Cecile. A year later, July 16, 1711, she made her profession. Little else is known of her life. The annalist relates that no one of her sisters surpassed her in obedience and humility, in esteem for her vocation, and in devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the Blessed Virgin, and Saint Joseph.⁹⁶

During the fifty-one years of her religious life Mother Davis of Ste. Cecile knew only three loves, God, the poor, and the community. Her last fifteen years were spent as an invalid in the infirmary, but the annalist adds that, notwithstanding her suffering, she never omitted a prayer or committed the least infraction of the rule. For six years she was paralyzed and unable to render any service. She bore this trial with edifying patience and gratitude. When the British began bombarding Quebec in 1759, she was moved to the General Hospital outside the city. Here all the Sisters fled except those who remained to look after affairs. The nuns feared the worst if the British captured the city, for they regarded the English as the enemies of God and of their country. On the occupation of the city by General Murray, however, the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu were shown the same consideration as that given to the Ursulines, and provision was made likewise for their food supply.⁹⁷ Thus the last days of Mother Davis of Ste. Cecile were spent amid the confusion and desolation of war. Having suffered a stroke of apoplexy, she was anointed and expired, June 13, 1761.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ "Biographical Notice of Mary Ann Davis" in Archives of the Hôtel-Dieu, Quebec. Cf. Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 250-352.

⁹⁷ Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 439-445. Hôtel-Dieu was also occupied by the English and the Hospitallers nursed their wounded.

⁹⁸ "Copie de la lettre circulaire annonçant la mort de Mère Ste. Cecile" in Archives of the Hôtel-Dieu, Quebec. Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 270; Casgrain, *L'Hôtel-Dieu*, 445.

CHAPTER III

CAPTIVE CONVERTS IN MONTREAL

Montreal, even more than Quebec, figured largely in the lives of the captives of New England. Because its religious history is so closely associated with its political and social development, it is necessary to summarize the salient facts in the foundation of Montreal in order to understand the milieu into which the captives were introduced. Parkman, writing of the events under consideration, asks: "Is this true history or romance?" He answers: "It is both."¹

What was it that led the French, so attached to their native land, to cross the ocean and settle in a wilderness where attacks of the Iroquois Indians and untold hardships awaited them? Was it love of adventure? Was it mere desire for gain? Or were they prompted by supernatural motives? History reveals that the organizers of the Company of Montreal had as their assigned object to promote the glory of God and to establish religion in New France.² For this reason the promoters of the enterprise proposed to found at Montreal three religious communities: one for secular priests to direct the colonists and convert the Indians, one of nuns to nurse the sick, and still another of nuns to teach the faith to the children of red and white alike.³

Paul de Chomedey, better known as Sieur Maisonneuve, was chosen to lead the expedition. As the contingent of colonists,

¹ Parkman, *Jesuits*, 210.

² Montreal had been discovered and named by Jacques Cartier in 1535. Champlain in 1611 had elected La Place Royale as a site for future settlement. It remained for the organizers of the Montreal Company, namely M. Jerome le Royer (Sieur de la Dauversière), Receiver-General of Finance at La Fleche in Anjou, M. Olier, afterwards Founder of the Society of St. Sulpice and Baron le Fancamp, friend of Dauversière, to make the foundation. They purchased the island of Montreal from the Hundred Associates for colonization.—William Atherton, *Montreal under the French Regime* (1914), I, 58-61; Parkman, *Jesuits*, 195-207.

³ Atherton, *op. cit.*, I, 193.

consisting of forty men, was ready to embark (1641), Jeanne Mance and her servant, Marie Joly, joined them.⁴ Jeanne was to superintend the internal economy of the establishment, and to care for the sick, the wounded, and the needy. To her belongs the honor of being the lay pioneer in the field of nursing and social work in Canada. Before they left for America, Madame de Bullion promised that she would finance the hospital in Montreal. The only stipulation was that Madame should be known as the "unknown benefactress."⁵

At Quebec Madame de la Peltrie joined Jeanne Mance and went with her to Montreal. Madame remained until the colony received an increase of women in the next expedition.⁶ The hospital was erected in 1644. In 1656 arrangements were made that the Hospitallers of St. Joseph at La Fleche would assume the work of the hospital. For the purpose of reorganizing the Montreal Company and of securing additional funds for her hospital from Madame de Bullion, Jeanne Mance returned to France in 1658. In June, 1659, she and her Hospitallers embarked for the return voyage to Canada. Madame de Bullion wrote into her contract for financing the hospital that Jeanne Mance should remain the administratrix during her life, after which the office should revert to the Hospitallers.⁷

As the Ursulines, the spiritual daughters of Angela de Merici, became noted for their work as teachers in Quebec and its environs, so the daughters of Marguerite Bourgeoys contributed much to the building up a Christian culture in the city of Ville-Marie de Montreal and other Canadian communities. At the invitation of Paul de Chomedey (Sieur Maisonneuve), the Governor of Montreal, Marguerite Bourgeoys, who was an extern of the Sisters

⁴ Sister St. Ignatia Doyle, *Marguerite Bourgeoys and Her Congregation* (1940), 15.

⁵ J. K. Foran, *Jeanne Mance, "The Angel of the Colony"* (1931), 18. Like Madame de Bullion the members of the Montreal Company declined to have their names mentioned and the amount of their subscriptions published although they dedicated great sums to the spreading of Christianity and civilization.—Foran, *op. cit.*, 23.

⁶ Douglas, *New England and New France*, 273-274; Foran, *op. cit.*, 43.

⁷ Foran, *op. cit.*, 85-94.

of Notre Dame⁸ at Troyes, France, set out in June, 1653. On her arrival, she was gladly welcomed by Jeanne Mance, with whom she at first associated herself in works of mercy. On April 30, 1657, she opened her first school.⁹

To insure greater freedom of action Mother Bourgeoys decided to found an uncloistered Society, the members of which would be free to instruct the children in whatever parishes the priests might establish houses of her Order. The work of Marguerite Bourgeoys flourished, and her convents began to multiply. Parkman pays tribute to her in these words: "In Marguerite Bourgeoys was realized the fair ideal of Christian womanhood . . . which soothed with gentle influence the wilderness of a barbarous age."¹⁰ Likewise he writes of the hospital sisters of Quebec and Montreal that it would be difficult to conceive of an abnegation more complete than theirs. In the almost total absence of trained and skilled physicians the burden of caring for the sick and wounded fell to the nuns who, although wretchedly poor themselves, labored without complaint.¹¹ Because of their devotion and self sacrifice, both Orders were to influence the lives of the captives brought to Montreal.

RUTH AND AARON LITTLEFIELD

Devotion to the sick manifested by the Hospitallers brought others to join their community. Among the number were two New England girls, Ruth Littlefield and Mary Silver.¹² The clues to the early history of the former are few. Ruth, Aaron,

⁸ This was a society composed of girls, similar to the Sodality organization of the present day.—Doyle, *op. cit.*, 23-24.

⁹ Etienne M. Faillon, *La Vie de la Soeur Bourgeoys* (1853), I, 66 *et seq.* The same spirit of friendliness and co-operation that existed between the Ursulines and the Hospitallers of Quebec was manifested between the Hospitallers of Montreal and Marguerite Bourgeoys' congregation. When Jeanne Mance returned to France in 1658 in behalf of her hospital she was accompanied by Marguerite Bourgeoys to secure the assistance of other teachers.—Foran, *op. cit.*, 86; Douglas, *New England and New France*, 275-276.

¹⁰ Parkman, *Jesuits*, 207. Cf. Atherton, *op. cit.*, I, 113-118; 229-232.

¹¹ Francis Parkman, *The Old Regime in Canada* (1885), 356.

¹² *Infra*, 36.

and Tabitha are listed as children of Moses and Martha Lord Littlefield, who were captured at Wells, Maine, August 10, 1703, and carried to Canada.¹³ On the "Roll of English Prisoners in the Hands of the French and Indians in Canada Given to Mr. Vaudruille's Messengers" the name of Tabitha is not mentioned.¹⁴ It was supposed that she was killed; from the story as related in Bradbury's *History of Kennebunkport*, however, it could be inferred that she was adopted by the Indians and became a squaw.¹⁵

Ruth joined the Hospitallers at Montreal. The records of the Hôtel-Dieu date her birth, 1699. In 1719 she entered the Order as a lay Sister and became known as Sister Angelique. Her work was to care for the sick while the choir Sisters were at prayers and to help with the manual labor of the institution. She died January 9, 1732, at the age of thirty-three. This is all that the annals reveal.¹⁶

More is known of her brother Aaron, who was taken to Boucherville where he was baptized by the English speaking Father Meriel, S.S.,¹⁷ January 27, 1704. Seigneur Boucher of Boucherville

¹³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 404. Their great grandfather was Edmund Littlefield, a warm partisan of Wheelwright. When the latter was forced to leave Boston because of the Antinomian controversy, Littlefield followed Wheelwright to Exeter and later to Wells, Maine, where he is described as one of the wealthiest men of the town.—Bell, *Exeter*, 29; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 404.

¹⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 92.

¹⁵ Charles Bradbury, *History of Kennebunkport* (1837), 154; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 409.

¹⁶ Archives of the Hôtel-Dieu, Montreal. Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 409; Fallon, *op. cit.*, 135-136.

¹⁷ Antoine Henri Meriel is known in the annals of Montreal for his work among the English captives. Born in France in 1660 or 1661, he entered the Sulpician Order and about 1690 was sent to New France to succeed M. Barthelemy as chaplain of Hôtel-Dieu in Montreal.—Cyprien Tanguay's *Répertoire général du clergé-canadien depuis la fondation de la colonie jusqu'à nos jours* (1868), 66; Baker, *True Stories*, 320-321. Through his knowledge of the English language along with his ability and zeal many were converted to Catholicism. The baptismal records which he wrote are valuable because of the amount of pertinent information they reveal. Father Meriel spent his entire patrimony in ransoming and aiding these captives. He thereby became so impoverished that he was unable to continue this work,

was his godfather and the Seignior's wife, Charlotte Denys, his godmother. Aaron was naturalized as a Frenchman, 1710, at the age of sixteen. Four years later when Williams and Stoddard came to Quebec for an exchange of prisoners, Captain Baker made arrangements in Montreal for the boy to go home and supplied him with all necessary clothing, but he refused to leave his adopted country. Stoddard's and Bourne's prejudice against the Church caused them to conclude that the twenty-year-old boy had been either intimidated or enchanted by the priests.¹⁸ On February 3, 1717, Aaron married at Boucherville Marie Brunel of Varennes, an adjoining parish.¹⁹

It is known that Aaron came to visit his mother in New England. This was after his father's death when his mother had married John Abbot of Berwick:²⁰ His mother dying intestate in 1726, he, as her only son and heir, claimed her inheritance and in 1738 sued three of his kinsmen to recover his possessions. The case is interesting in that the law debarred a Catholic from maintaining an action for recovery of real estate. Christine Otis Baker,²¹ a former captive in Montreal, living in Dover, when called upon to testify deposed as follows:

All that I can say concerning Aaron Littlefield who whares taken by the Injons from Calebunk in ye Province of Massitusetts to the Best of My Knowledge is as

whereupon the Intendant and the Governor General wrote to the home government asking that he might be reimbursed by the crown. Before he received this award from his sovereign, he died at the Hôtel-Dieu on January 12, 1713, at the age of fifty-two.—Baker, *True Stories*, 321; Etienne M. Faillon, *La Vie de Mlle. Mance et l'histoire de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Ville Marie* (1854), II, 165.

¹⁸ "Stoddard's Journal," *op. cit.*, V., 37; Bourne, *op. cit.*, 252.

¹⁹ Cyprien Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique des familles canadiennes* (1888), V, 413. The names of the children are also mentioned. The family name of Littlefield appeared Lidfil, Lighfil, Litrefil, Lettrefilde, Lidfril, and Litrefille.

²⁰ After this visit Mary Storer St. Germain in writing to her brother, May, 1728, tells him "Aaron litesfields is well and his families he remembers his love to you."—Storer, *op. cit.*, 85.

²¹ When the Indians assaulted Dover, June 27, 1689, to avenge the treachery of Richard Waldron, they attacked the house of Richard Otis, the blacksmith of the place. Otis was killed, and his wife and baby Margaret were taken to Canada. Four years later Mrs. Otis was baptized and received into the Church. She married Philip Robitaille, a French gentleman of Montreal. The baby in the meantime had also been baptized and

follows, that I Very Well knew him in Canaday and that he was baptized Peter and that he was A Papist by Profeshon and his Living and his marriage was in a place called Bashervell in Canaday, Nine Miles from Mount Royal, and that I See his Sister in the Nunnery in Canaday about fifteen or Sixteen years ago. And this is ye Hull truth of What I know, as witness my hand, Sworn to Before Paul Gerrish. J. P. Dover. April, 1738.

The verdict returned was "in his favor, if a Papist could hold real estate; but if not, for the defendant."²² When the decision rendered was against Aaron, he appealed his case to the Supreme Court in York County. Aaron's attorney again had Mrs. Christine Otis Baker give testimony, but this time she declared that she never saw Peter Littlefield baptized in Canada and that no priest ever told her that he was, but she concluded that he had been baptized "from the custom of the papists" and because "he always went by the name of Peter after she was acquainted with him." This time Littlefield received a favorable verdict because they could not prove him to be a Catholic.²³ The last mention of Aaron is found in the account of the Reverend John Norton, September 8, 1749, in which he says he had a long discourse with an Englishman named Littlefield who had been taken as a lad from Piscataqua²⁴ and who had a family and was living "at Champlain."²⁵

received the name of Christine. When Christine was sixteen years old, she married a Frenchman of Montreal named Le Beau. On the arrival, 1714, of the commissioners, Williams, Stoddard, and Baker in Canada, Madame Le Beau, now a widow, fell in love with Captain Baker. The so-called chicanery of the priests did not prevent her from returning to New England. Leaving her mother and children in Montreal, she accompanied Captain Baker home. Coming to the town of Brookfield, she was given a grant of "upland and meadow" with the provision that she remain in the province and marry Captain Thomas Baker. The Reverend Solomon Stoddard of Northampton rebaptized her, and needless to say, she and the Captain were joined in wedlock.—Baker, *True Stories*, 25-34; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 152; "Stoddard's Journal," *op. cit.*, V, 36, 40-41. Cf. Shea, "The Catholic Question in New England," *op. cit.*, 216-228.

²² Bourne, *op. cit.*, 253. Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 408.

²³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 408.

²⁴ John Norton, *Narrative*, 30. The towns around the Piscataqua River were sometimes referred to as Piscataqua.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 127; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 408. No doubt the location was Chambly or Chamblée, and not Champlain.

MARY SILVER

Haverhill, a little frontier village in Massachusetts, suffered its severest Indian raid on August 30, 1708.²⁶ Among the captives taken was Mary Silver, about fourteen years of age. She was the eldest daughter of Thomas Silver of Newbury, Massachusetts, and his wife, Mary Williams. Thomas Silver had died in 1695, and Mary's mother had married Captain Wainwright, judge and commandant of Haverhill. Having been redeemed by the French, Mary was brought to Montreal and placed as a pupil in the house of the Congregation of Notre Dame.²⁷ On February 2, 1710, she was baptized by Father Meriel who entered in the baptismal register the date of her birth as March 10, 1694. Governor General Vaudreuil was her godfather and Madame Charlotte Denis, wife of Claude de Ramezay, Governor of Montreal, was her god-mother. Later, on being confirmed, she took the name of Adelaide. It is this name that appears on the later records.²⁸

When Mrs. Wainwright heard that her child was to become a Catholic, she addressed the following petition to the General Court of Massachusetts:

Haverill, April 29, 1710

To His Excellency Joseph Dudley, Esq.

Capt. General and Governor in Chief, and to ye Honorable council and General Assembly Now Mett the petition of Widow Mary Wainwright humbly sheweth that Whereas my Daughter hath been for a long time in Captivity with ye French in Canada and I have late reason to fear that her soul is in great Danger if not all redy captivated and she brought to their ways theirefore I would humbly Intreat your Excellency that some care may be taken for her Redemption before Canada be so endeared to her that I shall never have my Daughter any more. Some are ready to say there are so few captives in Canada that it is not worth while to poot ye Cuntry to ye charges to send for them but I hoope your Excel-

²⁶ Charlevoix, *op. cit.* (1871), V, 205-210; Thomas Hutchinson, *The History of the Province of Massachusetts* (1767), II, 157-158.

²⁷ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 165.

²⁸ Baker, *True Stories*, 325-326; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 357.

lency no (r) No other Judichous men will thinck so for St. James hath Instructed us as you may see chap. V v20. Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the errour of his way, shall save a soul from Death and shall hide a multitude of sins this is all I can do at present but I desire humbly to Begg of God that he would Direct the hearts of our Rulers to do that which may be most for his glory and for the good of his poor Distressed Creatures and so I take leave to subscribe myself your most Humble petitioner

Mary Wainwright Widow

In the House of Representatives June 9, 1710

Read ye 12th read and recommended In Council

June 12, 1710 Read & concurred in.²⁹

Before the close of the year 1710 Mary Adelaide Silver was admitted as a postulant into the congregation of the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu at Montreal, where Father Meriel was chaplain. Governor Dudley of Massachusetts entered into negotiations with Vaudreuil for the return of Mary Silver to New England, for Vaudreuil wrote to Governor Dudley, June 16, 1711, as follows: "M. Silver and generally all the men and women prisoners were as free to return as he said Esther Wheelwright was, but he would not oblige those to go back who preferred to remain."³⁰

After the treaty of Utrecht, 1713, Mrs. Wainwright wrote to her daughter entreating her to return. In addition she sent money with an urgent appeal to the Governor of Canada to send her home. This request of her mother occasioned Sister Adelaide to address Governor Vaudreuil the following:

Monsieur, I tenderly love my dear Mother, but before everything, I am bound to obey God, and I declare to you that I am resolved to live and die in the holy religion which I have embraced and to die a nun of St. Joseph. My dearest wish is, that my mother embrace the holy Catholic faith with which it has pleased God to enlighten me.³¹

²⁹ Baker, *True Stories*, 326-327.

³⁰ Fallon, *op. cit.*, 81. Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 358.

³¹ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 165-166; Baker, *True Stories*, 328.

Sister Mary Adelaide was therefore allowed to continue her religious life, ministering to the sick and wounded. When Father Meriel died, 1713, she became the apostle among her compatriots, many of whom she converted. For thirty years she spent the life of a religious at the Hôtel-Dieu. She died April 2, 1740, at the age of forty-seven.³²

LYDIA LONGLEY

The Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame were the first to receive a New England captive on probation. Lydia Longley (Langley) was seized when the Indians on July 27, 1694, raided Groton, a town a few miles from Boston.³³ Her parents, William and Deliverance (Crisp) Longley, with five of their children were killed, and Lydia, her brother John, and her little sister Betty were taken to Montreal.³⁴ Here Lydia was ransomed by Jacques Le Ber, a well-known merchant in the city, who placed her in the convent school at Notre Dame. On April 24, 1698, she was baptized, taking the name of Madeleine. M. Caille performed the ceremony and by special permission received her into the Catholic Church in the chapel of the Congregation of Notre Dame.³⁵ That same year she entered the novitiate. Three years later, September 19, 1699, as Sister St. Madeleine³⁶ she made her

³² Archives of the Community of the Hôtel-Dieu of Montreal; Baker, *True Stories*, 328.

³³ Groton had been raided (1676) during the time of King Philip's War. For the next fifteen or twenty years the Indians continued their occasional depredations murdering the inhabitants, burning their houses, destroying their crops, and killing their cattle. The second attack came in 1694. This time the Indians had the material and sympathetic aid of the French in Canada. Twenty-two persons were killed and thirteen were captured.—Samuel A. Green, *Groton during the Indian Wars* (1883), 1-50.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 75-77. William Longley's father was one of the earliest settlers of Groton. He had been town clerk during the years 1666 and 1667. This position William Longley was holding at the time of his death.

³⁵ Copy of Lydia Longley's baptismal record in Fallon, *op. cit.*, 41; also Green, *op. cit.*, 77. No doubt the baptism was performed within the convent chapel to permit Jeanne Le Ber, daughter of Jacques Le Ber, who had immured herself in a cell behind the altar, to witness the ceremony.

³⁶ Archives of the Congregation of Notre Dame. Cf. Doyle, *op. cit.*, 169.

religious profession. When next we hear from her she is acting as godmother to the child of Judge Premont.³⁷ Sister St. Madeleine was then living at the Convent of the Holy Family on the Island of Orleans near Quebec and was probably superior of the house.³⁸ There is no other record concerning her until the convent annals give notice of her death at Montreal, July 28, 1758, at the age of eighty-four years, sixty-two of which were spent as a religious.³⁹

THE SAYWARD FAMILY

Two years previous to the capture of Lydia Longley, the Abnaki Indians had surprised and destroyed York, Maine. All perished with the exception of some women and children who were taken prisoners, January 25, 1692. Among the captives were Mrs. Mary Plaisted with two of her children from a former marriage, Mary and Esther Sayward (Sayer), aged eleven and seven respectively.⁴⁰ They were treated with humaneness by the Indians who hoped to earn the usual French ransom money. Montreal no sooner heard of the capture of Mrs. Plaisted than she was

³⁷ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 286.

³⁸ Archives of the Congregation of Notre Dame. This mission had been established in 1685. Cf. Sister St. Euphrosine, "Congregation of Notre Dame," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913), XI, 127. Fallon, *op. cit.*, 43-45, has an account of Sister Lydia copied from the Archives of the Congregation of Notre Dame.

³⁹ Archives of the Congregation of Notre Dame. Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 286. Lydia Longley's little sister Betty perished from hunger and exposure shortly after her capture. John, her brother, after more than four years, was ransomed much against his will. After he came home, it is said that Lydia, Sister St. Madeleine, wrote him from Canada urging him to abjure the Protestant religion, but that he remained "true to the faith of his early instruction." Like his father and grandfather, John Longley filled many important offices in the church and town of Groton. Today the site where William Longley lived has been marked by a monument bearing the following inscription: "Here dwelt William and Deliverance Longley with their eight children. On the 27th of July, 1694, the Indians killed the father, mother, and five children and carried into captivity the other three."—Green, *op. cit.*, 74-76; Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 102-103.

⁴⁰ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 236-237. Cf. Baker, *True Stories*, 77.

ransomed with her two children. Being confided to the care of Marguerite Bourgeoys, Mrs. Plaisted came to esteem and love her benefactors, for they gave her the best of care, both spiritual and temporal. She asked to be received into the Catholic Church, and on December 8, 1693, she and her two children were baptized *sous condition* with great solemnity in the church of Notre Dame.⁴¹ In 1695, when she was ransomed by Captain Matthew Carey, she returned home, leaving her two children in the school of the Sisters of Notre Dame.⁴² A year after her release she was "Presented at the Court of Wells, for not attending ye Publick worship of God upon ye Lord's Day."⁴³ Later she evidently yielded to pressure and drifted away from the Catholic faith, for her name appears on the church list in the *History of York, Maine*.⁴⁴

Marie Sayward, born April 4, 1681, received at her baptism on December 8, 1693, the added name of Genevieve. About the age of seventeen she entered the community of Notre Dame and was professed Sister Marie of the Angels in 1700.⁴⁵ Later she became superior of the famous Indian mission school established in 1701 at Sault-au-Récollet, near Montreal. No doubt she was chosen superior because of her English speech as many of the English-speaking captives were brought to Sault-au-Récollet.⁴⁶ After a time she was transferred to Quebec. As the missions of Quebec were for many reasons of special importance, her transfer would seem to evidence her admirable qualities.⁴⁷ Here at Quebec she died at the age of thirty-six and was buried, March 28, 1717, in the parish church.⁴⁸

Esther Sayward, born March 9, 1685, and known in Canada under the baptismal name of Marie-Joseph Sayer, was probably

⁴¹ Archives of the Congregation of Notre Dame. Cf. Fallon, *op. cit.*, 79.

⁴² Charles Edward Banks, *History of York, Maine* (1931), 298; Baker, *True Stories*, 79.

⁴³ Baker, *True Stories*, 80.

⁴⁴ Banks, *op. cit.*, 304.

⁴⁵ Archives of the Congregation of Notre Dame. Banks, *op. cit.*, 304, erred when he stated that she was professed in 1699. See Doyle, *op. cit.*, 167.

⁴⁶ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 20.

⁴⁷ Banks, *op. cit.*, 305; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 239.

⁴⁸ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 240; Baker, *True Stories*, 86.

educated also with the Sisters of Notre Dame. In 1710 she was granted naturalization, and two years later, January 5, 1712, she was married to Sieur Pierre de Lestage, a well-to-do merchant of the town and Seigneur of Berthier.⁴⁹ On the death of her husband in 1743 she purchased a house adjoining the convent and adopted two girls whom she educated. They afterwards became nuns and were known as Sisters St. Basil and St. Pierre.⁵⁰ The Sisters called her their "illustrious benefactress," for she freely bestowed her money upon the institution, saving but a small income for herself. She was also very kind to Mother Esther of the Infant Jesus of the Ursuline nuns of Quebec⁵¹ to whom she was related, her mother having been a granddaughter of John Wheelwright of Wells, Maine.

It is probable that Esther Sayward visited her relatives in York, for it is said that in 1725, when Governor Dudley's commissioners from Massachusetts returned home with some redeemed captives, there accompanied them the wives of Pierre de Lestage (Esther Sayward), and Jean Gauthier (Mary Storer).⁵² Certain it is that Major Nathaniel Wheelright on his trip to Canada visited her as well as Mother Esther of the Infant Jesus, for he wrote in his journal September 21, 1754: "Sunday morning, parted with Madame Lestage, from whom I not only received many civilities, but many distinguished marks of affection."⁵³ Madame Lestage died January 17, 1770, and was buried near her beloved Sisters of the Congregation under the chapel of St. Anne in the Church of Notre Dame, Montreal.⁵⁴

ABIGAIL NIMS (NAIMS) AND JOSIAH RISING (RAIZENNE)

Among the pupils of Sister Marie of the Angels (Marie Genevieve Sayward) was Abigail Nims who was born May 27, 1700.

⁴⁹ Baker, *True Stories*, 83; Doyle, *op. cit.*, 167; Kenneth Roberts, *Trending into Maine* (1938), 21-22.

⁵⁰ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 87, 242.

⁵¹ *Les Ursulines*, III, 360; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 242. Madame Lestage gave to the Ursulines 1,000 pounds in 1760. The monastery was hard pressed at the time.

⁵² Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 241, 317; *infra*, 48.

⁵³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 243, quoting MS in Mass. Hist. Soc. Collection.

⁵⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 243; Baker, *True Stories*, 87.

She, her mother, her seventeen-year-old brother Ebenezer, a sister named Thankful, and a step-sister, Elizabeth Hull, sixteen, were captured at Deerfield, Massachusetts, March 11, 1703.⁵⁵ The mother and Thankful died on the march to Canada.⁵⁶ Ebenezer was not ransomed until after 1714.⁵⁷ Elizabeth Hull, however, was ransomed previous to this, for on December 19, 1707, she married her step-brother, John Nims, at Deerfield.⁵⁸ Little Abigail in the meantime was brought to the Sault-au-Récollet mission where the Sulpicians and the Sisters of Marguerite Bourgeoys labored to bring about the conversion of the savages by giving their children a Christian education. Abigail was taken into custody by an Indian squaw named Ganastarsi, who called the child Touatogouach. At the mission she was baptized by Father Meriel, S.S., June 15, 1704, under the Christian name of Marie Elizabeth.⁵⁹

At the same time that Abigail Nims was captured, ten-year-old Josiah Rising, whose family had moved to Deerfield from Suffield two years previously, was also seized and brought to Sault-au-Récollet. He was carried into the home of his Macqua Master⁶⁰ who called him Shoentakouanni. He was baptized by Father M. Quere,⁶¹ December 23, 1706, under the name of Ignace. According to Baker and Coleman the children were not ransomed by Lieutenant Sheldon, commissioner to Canada for the redemption of captives, because of the wiles of the priests and religious.

⁵⁵ Baker, *True Stories*, 238. George Sheldon, *History of Deerfield, Massachusetts* (1896), II, 250, in his "Genealogy" says that the capture took place in 1704.

⁵⁶ Baker, *True Stories*, 235; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 102.

⁵⁷ "Stoddard's Journal," *op. cit.*, 21, 41; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 103.

⁵⁸ Sheldon, *op. cit.*, 251.

⁵⁹ Faillon, *Soeur Bourgeoys*, II, 443; Baker, *True Stories*, 238; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 107.

⁶⁰ The Macquas were the converted Mohawks who had been induced to come to Montreal. The Sulpicians in 1675 had established the Iroquois mission called "The Mountain" on the island of Montreal. In 1704 the mission was transferred to Sault-au-Récollet, four miles north of Montreal. In 1720 it was moved again to its present site at Oka on the Lake of the Two Mountains.—*Catholic Encyclopedia* (1911), X, 387. Cf. G. Dugas, *Quelques notes historiques sur le Sault-au-Récollet* (1910), *passim*.

⁶¹ Baker, *True Stories*, 238; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 286.

Sister Marie of the Angels (Esther Sayward) and the other Sisters are pictured as keeping the little girl day and night out of sight of any possible visitors.⁶² This representation does not seem in harmony with the fact that in 1704 Vaudreuil, the Governor of New France, had written to Versailles repeating Frontenac's request for aid because "a large number of English prisoners whom we are obliged to clothe and feed, some being persons of consideration, whom we have bought from the Indians gives us great expense."⁶³ New Englanders who had become Catholics were not compelled to return to New England even if the colonial authorities were willing to redeem them. This exemption, however, did not apply to children under twelve since they were not considered old enough to understand the religious motives,⁶⁴ nor did it have reference to children who were with the Indians,⁶⁵ for an Indian had absolute control over his captive, and until the English captive was ransomed, the Indian could dispose of him.⁶⁶

Moreover, it appears that the English always wished to strike a bargain. When in the summer of 1714 there came to Westfield a Macqua Indian offering for sale a girl, believed to be Abigail Nims, it was ordered that she be bought "on the reasonableness terms."⁶⁷ Though the penuriousness of New England was constantly complained of, Governor Dudley maintained that he would not ransom his people, for a ransom merely encouraged the Indians in their depredations. It is stated that to raise funds to redeem the first Canadian captives carried from Hatfield to Deerfield, in 1677, the joint effort of forty-six towns was required.⁶⁸ In 1705, when Governor Dudley wished to make a treaty with Governor General Vaudreuil of Canada, the treaty was rejected

⁶² Baker, *True Stories*, 240. Cf. Baker's contradictory statement, *True Stories*, 245.

⁶³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 124. Cf. Parkman MSS I, 123, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Collection.

⁶⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 121, quoting Quebec Documents II, 309.

⁶⁵ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 121.

⁶⁶ Baker, *True Stories*, 245.

⁶⁷ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 105.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 70.

because Dudley had requested that the two governments return all prisoners without regard to number and do everything possible to reclaim those in the hands of the Indians.⁶⁹ In December, 1705, "as an exemplary act of generosity," Dudley returned some Port Royal prisoners—thereby avoiding the cost of their subsistence during the winter.⁷⁰ It is affirmed, too, that the presence of Catholic prisoners so disturbed the selectmen in Boston that a petition concerning them was sent to the Governor of Massachusetts.⁷¹

To return to Abigail Nims—it is said that John Nims, her brother, went to Sault-au-Récollet and offered a considerable sum for her ransom and that the savages would willingly have given her up if she had shown any desire to go with her relatives. The story goes that John gave emphasis to the provision in his father's will that she would be amply provided with this world's goods if she would return to her Protestant relatives. The inventory of Godfrey Nims' estate, however, shows that he was not a rich man.⁷² To her brother's entreaties it is related that Abigail replied she would rather be a poor captive among Catholics than become a rich heiress of a Protestant family. Because of this resolution, so it is said, the priests of St. Sulpice obtained the freedom of Abigail Nims (Naim) and Josiah Rising (Raizenne).⁷³ Whatever the facts of the case may be, Abigail Naim and Josiah Raizenne were married, July 29, 1715, while they were still *en sauvages*. They were evidently still living in this state, though Christianized, when their first child, Marie Madeleine, was born October 22, 1716, for only the Indian names of her parents were recorded, whereas their names were registered as Naim and Ignace Raizenne, both English, when Simon, their second child was born.⁷⁴

When the mission was removed from Sault-au-Récollet to the Lake of the Two Mountains, 1720, the Raizennes followed.

⁶⁹ O'Callaghan, *Documents* (1855), IX, 770-773.

⁷⁰ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 85.

⁷¹ Styles, "Puritan Catholics," *loc. cit.*, 228.

⁷² Baker, *True Stories*, 243.

⁷³ Faillon, *Soeur Bourgeoys*, II, 443; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 107.

⁷⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 108.

Here, as a tribute to their edifying lives, they were given a vast tract of land a short distance from the village.⁷⁵ They and their eight exemplary children caused the name of Raizenne to be known and respected in Canadian history.⁷⁶ Their eldest and their youngest daughters entered the Congregation of Notre Dame, and four other daughters married into families well-known in Canadian history.⁷⁷ Madeleine, the eldest, called in religion Sister St. Herman, was sent after her religious profession at Ville Marie, the motherhouse at Montreal, back to the Lake of the Two Mountains because of her knowledge of the Indian language. Here she spent thirty-four years before she returned to Ville Marie, where she died at the advanced age of eighty-four on March 28, 1796.⁷⁸

Marie Raizenne, the youngest daughter was born in 1736. She entered religion where, taking the name of her father, she was known as Sister St. Ignace. She was one of the distinguished members of the Sisters of Notre Dame. In 1761 she became superior of the school at St. Famille near Quebec; in 1778 she was named superior of the Congregation, an office she held for two terms. She is said to have possessed to a remarkable degree the true spirit of Marguerite Bourgeoys.⁷⁹

Simon, the second eldest, was educated by the Sulpicians and was ordained to the priesthood in 1774. He served at several parishes and at the time of his death, 1798, was chaplain of the General Hospital in Quebec.⁸⁰ The youngest child, Jean Baptiste Jerome, born on September 30, 1740, married Marie-Charlotte Sabourin,⁸¹ the daughter of Sarah Hanson⁸² and Jean Baptiste

⁷⁵ Faillon, *Soeur Bourgeoys*, II, 445.

⁷⁶ Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique* (1889), VI, 501.

⁷⁷ Faillon, *Soeur Bourgeoys*, II, 446.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 442; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 109. Sister St. Ignace died April, 1811, at the age of seventy-six, the thirty-first year of her religious life.

⁸⁰ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 108.

⁸¹ Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique* (1890), VII, 106-107.

⁸² Sarah Hanson had been taken captive at Dover, New Hampshire. She was married to Jean Baptiste Sabourin by M. Quere.—Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 110-139; 161-166.

Sabourin. Jean Baptiste Raizenne inherited the estate of his father and the home continued to be well-known for the dispensing of hospitality and charity.⁸³ Coleman relates that up to the third generation at least twenty descendants had become priests or nuns.⁸⁴ Other members of the family were not less noteworthy in civil life. Thus it was that the harsh, intolerant, but sterling qualities of the Puritans, mellowed by contact with Catholic culture, effected a happy combination in their descendants.

THE STORER GIRLS

Among the captives taken with Esther Wheelwright at Wells, Maine, in 1703 were Mary Storer and her cousins, Priscilla and Rachel Storer.⁸⁵ Born in 1685, Mary was about eighteen years old at the time of her capture. She had been in the hands of the Indians some months when she was discovered by the indefatigable Jesuit missionary, Father Bigot, who induced the Indians to turn her over to him for a consideration.⁸⁶

Captain Samuel Hill, who had also been captured, wrote home on October 7, 1704, complaining of the lack of interest of the colonial authorities:

. . . If our government had sent prisoners home for some which Canada sent, I should have been sent home with my family and a great many others. If the governor of Massachusetts had only sent one man for me, I and all my family would have been restored.⁸⁷

In the spring of 1705 the following letter was received from Ebenezer and Abiah Hill, also prisoners, who wrote:

Cousin Pendleton Fletcher of Saco, Mary Sayer, brother Joseph's daughter and Mary Storer of Wells withe our

⁸³ There were ten children by this marriage: one daughter married; six became nuns and another died on the eve of her entrance into religion; one son became a priest, the other married.—Riley, *op. cit.*, 353, Note 39. A recent descendant of the family was the late Guillaume Forbes, Archbishop of Ottawa.

⁸⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 110.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 398.

⁸⁶ Storer, *op. cit.*, 44.

⁸⁷ Bourne, *op. cit.*, 261.

other friends and neighbors here are all well. Myself, wife and child are well. Pray that God may keep and in due time deliver us.⁸⁸

In the meantime Mary Storer had received instruction and had been baptized February 25, 1704, in the parish church of the Holy Family at Boucherville in the presence of the pastor of the church.⁸⁹ What her occupation was during these days is not known, but she must have been participating in Canadian life, for in November, 1708, she was married to Jean Gautier called St. Germain.⁹⁰ Father Meriel with the consent of the pastor performed the marriage ceremony. Her husband was the son of Germain Gautier and Jeanne Beauchamp, inhabitants of Côte St. Joseph in the parish of the Holy Family.⁹¹

It is interesting to learn that some of the converts in Canada visited their relatives or kept up a correspondence with them. It is also worthwhile to observe the friendliness that existed among the converts who remained in Canada.⁹² When Mr. Theodore Atkinson, Commissioner from New Hampshire, was in Montreal in 1725 he visited both Esther (Sayward) Lestage and Mary (Storer) Gautier.⁹³ In his journal of April 5, 1725, he wrote:

... In the afternoon we went about a League Down to see Mr. Storess Daughter who is very well marryd to a

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 17.

⁸⁹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 414. Storer, *op. cit.*, 48, says she was baptized in 1708. Boucherville is about three miles below Montreal.

⁹⁰ Storer, *op. cit.*, 45.

⁹¹ Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique* (1887), IV, 208; Storer, *op. cit.*, 45; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 414. The young couple soon dropped the name of Gautier and became known as St. Germain.

⁹² *Supra*, 17, 18, 41.

⁹³ Theodore Atkinson, *Diary* (1907), 33-34; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 241, 416. The Indian wars in Maine (1723-1724), sometimes called Father Rale's War, had ended with his death, August 23, 1724. The governor of Massachusetts, however, had addressed a letter, November, 1724, to the executives of New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire to invite them to join in sending a friendly delegation to Governor Vaudreuil of Canada. Ostensibly they were to protest against the French practice of aiding the Indians contrary to the Treaty of Utrecht, while at the same time they were to redeem English prisoners. Only New Hampshire replied favorably. She sent as her commissioner Theodore Atkinson.—Atkinson, *op. cit.*, 58-65; Belknap, *New Hampshire*, I, 213-241.

french man, a farmer and Lives very Grandly they have
5 child 3 m and 2 female.⁹⁴

When the commissioner returned, it seems that Esther (Sayward) Lestage accompanied him.⁹⁵ Probably Mary (Storer) Gautier also made the journey with him since she visited her people at this time, as is revealed by her letters, the first of which was written on her journey back to her home in Canada. It was dated June 26, 1725, Newport, Rhode Island, and was written to her brother Ebenezer, who was a well-to-do merchant in Boston.⁹⁶ Two days later, June 28, she wrote to her youngest brother, Seth, a minister at Watertown. He had made valiant efforts to make her see the error of her ways, but to no avail. In her letter she thanked him for his spiritual counsel and concern for her welfare and promised not to forget, but that is all.⁹⁷ In the same letter she expressed regret that she could not have stayed longer with her dear father and mother. It is evident then that she had also been to Wells, Maine, the residence of her father and mother, as well as to Boston.⁹⁸

From an answer to one of the letters of Ebenezer it is clear that he must have asked her to send one of her sons either to visit or to live with him. Mary thanked him for his "good will," but it appears neither parents nor sons wished to accept the invitation. In the same letter she asked him to look up an Englishman named Greenhill, to find out whether he was dead or alive since he had a wife and two sons in Montreal.⁹⁹ These letters, however, are for the most part of no historical value because, like other letters of that period, they consist chiefly of pious phrases and tender messages conveying no information.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, they are of

⁹⁴ Atkinson, *op. cit.*, 39; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 416.

⁹⁵ Atkinson, *op. cit.*, 44.

⁹⁶ Storer, *op. cit.*, 83; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 241. The itinerary was via Boston, Newport, Rhode Island, New York, and Albany, to Canada.

⁹⁷ Storer, *op. cit.*, 45, 83.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 45, 84.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 46, 85; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 417.

¹⁰⁰ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 417. Cf. Letters in "Appendix" in Storer, *op. cit.*, 83-94.

interest as they disclose the relations that existed between the redeemed captives in Canada and their kin in New England.¹⁰¹

To the Puritan mind, to become a Catholic was an unforgivable sin, as the wills of the time bear testimony. Thus the will of Mary Storer's father, made in 1721 and approved February, 1729, reads:

I Give and Bequeath to my beloved Daughter Mary St. Germain Fifty pounds in good Country pay upon Condition that She return from under the French Government and Settle in New England. Otherwise if She doth not returne Then I Give and bequeath to her the Sum of Ten Shillings in Countrey pay to be paid by my Executor within Two Years next after my Decease over and above what I have already given her.¹⁰²

Mary was, therefore, somewhat aggrieved when, after her father's death, she did not receive her share of the inheritance. In her letter to her mother dated April 19, 1733, she says that she had been told by her brother Ebenezer that she was to share equally with her sisters. At the same time she wrote to this brother.¹⁰³ Evidently either Ebenezer had blundered, or Mary had misunderstood,¹⁰⁴ for in response to his sister's grievance concerning the will he answered May 24, 1733:

. . . concerning what I wrote you about Fathers will I informed you as near as I could in my former letter, but I shall send your letter to Mother as soon as may bee so that she may order you what was Designed for you which I know she will do anything that is proper if it be not against the will of our Father Deceased this is all that offers except my Love. So Rest Your Loving Brother Eben'r Storer.¹⁰⁵

Apparently an estrangement with Mary's family grew out of her father's will, for no more letters passed for six years. Then she wrote to Ebenezer:

. . . I have not heard any knews of mother I dont know wheather she is in the Land of the Living, which obliges

¹⁰¹ Riley, *op. cit.*, 173.

¹⁰² Storer, *op. cit.*, 45-46; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 419.

¹⁰³ Storer, *op. cit.*, 86-87.

¹⁰⁴ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 419.

¹⁰⁵ Storer, *op. cit.*, 87-88.

me to address myself to you to lett me hear from her if you Still have any Love for me I hope you will not refuse me that Comfort.¹⁰⁶

Whether Ebenezer answered is unknown. No other correspondence is found until March 20, 1748, when Jean Gautier, Mary's husband, wrote to Ebenezer informing him of the death of Mary, August 25, 1747.¹⁰⁷ As he received no answer, he wrote again in June of the following year. Again there was no response; so he wrote a third time in April, 1750:

. . . I can assure you If you had a Desire to mortify me you have intirely Succeeded in it. But be assured notwithstanding your Indifference you will not deprive me of the Pleasure, of letting you hear from me. Or is it possible you may not have received what I had the Honour to write you last year. I believe the Death of your Sister must have affected you . . . As for me I am impatient to hear from you. And let me know if there have been any Deaths in the Family. I pray you to let me hear from you.¹⁰⁸

Ebenezer finally answered from Boston in 1750. He had received the "sorrowful News" of his sister's death and he had answered through the commissioners who were sent from Boston for exchange of prisoners. He gave news of the family saying "our aged Mother Storer died in July, 1748, almost two years ago." This closed the unique annals of communication among members of a family differing so widely in religious and political views.

Little is known of the other Storer girls, Priscilla and Rachel, daughters of Jeremiah Storer and Ruth Masters.¹⁰⁹ Priscilla was born in August, 1684. After her capture at Wells, August 21, 1703, she was brought to the house of Pierre Lanequet in Montreal and baptized conditionally, November 21, 1705. To her name Priscilla was added that of Marie. Pierre Lanequet, her guardian,

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 87-88; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 419.

¹⁰⁷ Storer, *op. cit.*, 90.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 91; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 419.

¹⁰⁹ Storer, *op. cit.*, 46.

was also her godfather. Priscilla evidently mingled in Canadian society, for on May 26, 1711, after the publication of the three banns, she was married to Jean Baptiste Dagueil, Sergeant in the company of De la Forest, in the church of Ville Marie, Montreal. Among those witnessing the ceremony were Mary Storer, cousin of the bride, and Father Meriel.¹¹⁰ Priscilla's husband was of some importance, for he was in Albany, New York, in 1712, on official business between Governors Vaudreuil and Dudley.¹¹¹

Mary (Storer) Gautier mentioned Priscilla frequently in her letters. In May, 1728, she wrote that her cousin Priscilla's husband was in France and that he would return in the fall.¹¹² Later, to her brother, she made mention of the fact that Priscilla had written to her father, but had received no reply. She then asked Ebenezer to keep her informed in all his letters as to the health of her uncle and added, "you do not make mention of my cousin Prissella in youre letters. I hope you will another time."¹¹³ This would indicate an interest in her relatives.

The next bit of information came from the Reverend John Norton, who was chaplain at Fort Massachusetts at the time of its capture in August, 1746.¹¹⁴ On reaching Montreal, on Septem-

¹¹⁰ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 422.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Storer, *op. cit.*, 85.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹¹⁴ *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography* (1888), IV, 537; Samuel G. Drake, *A Particular History of the Five Years French and Indian Wars* (1870), 118. The Reverend Mr. Norton relates the experience of his captivity in his *Narrative* which is of particular interest because of the insight it gives into the treatment of captives by the French and Indians. According to this account the captives who had surrendered at Fort Massachusetts received great consideration. Some were handed over to the Indians with the assurance they would suffer no harm. When they were leaving the river to travel through the wilderness for nearly sixty miles, Norton expressed concern over the feeble. He was reassured by M. Depuys that he had no cause for fear as the general had promised a reward to those Indians who took care of the weak and sick. The Indians looked, therefore, not only after women and children, but they also carried two men who were sick. Norton says "our men who had been ill grew better and recovered strength." At Quebec the prisoners had the free exercise of their religion.

ber 10, 1746, the Reverend Norton stayed at the home of M. Demuy where he was courteously entertained. Two Englishwomen came to see him that afternoon, but Norton recalled only the name of Hannah Rie who had been married to a Frenchman. The next day he wrote in his diary of Mayor Dagueil's visit. This official was married to an Englishwoman named Storer.¹¹⁵ One of the mayor's sons had been in the expedition that had captured Fort Massachusetts. Dagueil was accompanied by Mme. St. Germain (Mary Storer) who was able to discourse in the English tongue. She came to gain news of her friends and informed Norton that her brother Seth was minister of Watertown, Massachusetts, but John Norton was not acquainted with her brother nor with any of her friends.¹¹⁶ Jean Baptiste Dagueil died July 5, 1762, and his wife, May 13, 1768.¹¹⁷ Priscilla and Jean Baptiste had a family of eleven children. Their descendants are still to be found in Canada.¹¹⁸

Priscilla's sister Rachel was taken to Quebec. On April 16, 1706, in her nineteenth year, she was baptized by Father François Dupré. M. Jacques Le Vasseur de Nevey acted as her godfather.¹¹⁹ The next day she was married by Father Dupré to a printer by the name of Jean Berger. They moved to Montreal after 1707.¹²⁰ Their first child, Marie Françoise, was baptized by Father Meriel on November 21, 1707, and Rachel's sister was its godmother.¹²¹

In fact, Mr. Norton baptized the infant of Mrs. Smead who was born on the journey. From September 16 to 23 the "only event worth recording" was "that the Jesuits and some unknown gentlemen, understanding that I was short on it for clothing, sent me several shirts, a good winter coat, some caps, a pair of stockings and a few handkerchiefs, which were very acceptable."—Norton, *Narrative*, 18-36.

¹¹⁵ This was without doubt Priscilla's husband.

¹¹⁶ Norton, *Narrative*, 32-33.

¹¹⁷ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 422.

¹¹⁸ Tanguay, *Dictionnaire généalogique* (1887), III, 221.

¹¹⁹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 424. It is more than likely that he was her guardian; practically every captive had a guardian. These French Canadians were wholesome souls and gave almost every liberty to their prisoners, many of whom later married into the French families.

¹²⁰ E. Z. Massicotte, "Le Châtiment d'un chansonnier à Montréal au 18^e siècle," *Le Bulletin des recherches historiques*, XXII (1916), 49.

¹²¹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 424.

In 1709 Rachel's husband became involved in difficulties. Accused of having attacked the apothecary of Montreal, he was imprisoned. During his detention he composed some doggerel verses about the affair. The authorities considered his poem as dangerous pamphleteering; so he was condemned to stand in the market place for one hour with a sign around his neck bearing the words *Auteur de chansons*. After this incident the couple disappeared, and nothing more is known of them.¹²² Mary Storer St. Germain never mentioned Rachel in her letters. It is strange, however, that Rachel's father, when he made his will in 1729, named her "Rachel Bargee" his second daughter, her two sisters (Priscilla was not named), and three brothers to share his possessions in equal portion.¹²³ Because of her inclusion in the will one is led to believe that the Bergers most probably returned to New England and that Rachel gave up her Catholic allegiance.¹²⁴ Thus is added another incomplete episode to the many which confront the scholar who would try to trace the history of English colonial captives.

¹²² Massicotte, *loc. cit.*

¹²³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 424-425.

¹²⁴ Massicotte, *loc. cit.* Cf. Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 425.

CHAPTER IV

EUNICE WILLIAMS, FREEDOM, ABIGAIL, AND MARTHA FRENCH

EUNICE WILLIAMS

The most publicized among the Puritan captives was the Reverend John Williams, the minister of Deerfield, Massachusetts, who with his wife and five children was seized on February 29, 1704.¹ Williams had urged Governor Dudley to strengthen the Deerfield fortifications on the declaration of war between France and England in 1703, but the advice had not been heeded.² As a result some two hundred Indians and fifty Frenchmen, under the command of Hertel de Rouville took advantage of this neglect on the night of February 28. French and English versions differ greatly as to the damages caused during the expedition.³ Among the number captured were Mr. and Mrs. Williams, five of their children, and a negro woman servant.⁴

¹ John Williams was graduated from Harvard in 1683. On July 21, 1687, he married Eunice Mather, closely related to the Mathers of Boston. In 1688 he was ordained to the ministry as first pastor of Deerfield.—Raymond P. Stearns, "John Williams," *D.A.B.* (1936), XX, 270; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia* (1889), VI, 523-524.

² Thomas Church, *The History of the Great Indian War of 1675-1676*, edited by Samuel G. Drake (1860), 321. Deerfield at the time formed the extreme northwestern frontier of Massachusetts. Massachusetts, in March, 1694, had passed an act prohibiting the desertion of frontier towns, so that a man could change his residence only by permission of the governor and the council under the pain of forfeiting his land. Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 95. Though the people had to stay in their exposed homes on the border, the government supplied very little defense, which fact elicited the remark from Coleman that Versailles took better care of its colony.—Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 787-788. Dudley was Governor until 1715.

³ For English account see O'Callaghan, *Documents* (1854), IV, 1083; for French, *ibid.* (1855), IX, 762-765.

⁴ John Williams, *op. cit.* (3rd edition, 1758), 4; Channing, *op. cit.*, II, 537. Accounts vary as to the number attacking and the number taken prisoners. The five children captured were Esther, Eunice, Stephen, Samuel, and Warham. One son, Eleazer, was absent with friends at Hadley when the town of Deerfield was attacked.—Stephen Williams, *A Biographical Memoir of the Reverend John Williams* (1837), 37.

Then started the long march towards Canada. On the second day Mrs. Williams, still weak from recent childbirth, fell exhausted and was slain by the Indians.⁵ When the latter scattered ranks, as was their custom, the prisoners were divided, each being claimed by his captor.⁶ Thus the father was separated from his children. At Chambly, fifteen miles from Montreal, the officers promised Williams to write to the Governor of Canada of his passage down the river.⁷ Governor Vaudreuil, when informed of Williams' captivity, ransomed him and brought him to Montreal.⁸ Vaudreuil also bought the eldest daughter, Esther, and promised to do what he could to obtain the others from the Indians. The youngest child was bought by a lady of the place and the eldest son, Samuel, by a Montreal merchant, Jacques Le Ber.⁹

His second daughter, Eunice, with whom this account deals, was taken to the mission of St. Louis, known as Caughnawaga, nine miles above Montreal. She seems to have been treated with kindness throughout the journey. Williams wrote:

God made the heathen to pity our children, that though they had several wounded persons of their own to carry upon their shoulders for thirty miles, before they came to the river, yet they carried our children, incapable of traveling, upon their shoulders and in their arms.¹⁰

Parkman attributes this deed partly to kindness, partly to the price paid for every child.¹¹ It would seem that the Indians had a special love for children, thereby making it rather difficult at times

⁵ John Williams, *op. cit.*, 8.

⁶ Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 38-40; Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 68; Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 21-22. Cf. Douglas, "Slavery in the Colonies," *New England and New France*, 293-298.

⁷ Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 45.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 76; *Le Bulletin de historiques recherches*, III, (1897), 10.

¹⁰ John Williams, *op. cit.*, 6.

¹¹ Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 69; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 43.

for the French to ransom them.¹² Probably this explains why Eunice Williams was never ransomed.

Parkman, Penhallow, Belknap, and others, it is true, attribute the conversion and stay in Canada of captive converts to the intrigues of the Catholic clergy, especially the Jesuits. A just estimate of the question is rather difficult. The intense religious enthusiasm of New Englanders in maintaining their religious conviction was equaled by the fervor of Catholic French-Canadians. The men of Massachusetts and those of Canada looked upon religion as an indispensable bulwark of the State.¹³ Therefore, considering the attitudes of both nations, it is not surprising that the priests of Canada essayed to inculcate the doctrines of the Catholic religion among those children and adults whom they expected to remain in Canada. They were zealous not only to make converts, but also to lessen the dangers arising from treasonable activities.

The story of Eunice Williams, based mainly on the Reverend Mr. Williams' *Redeemed Captive*, has been related several times by the various writers of New England history. Born on September 17, 1696, at the time of her capture she was seven years old.¹⁴

¹² During the march no woman was subjected to violence. Parkman says that this was true with few exceptions of all the Indian wars in New England, but he attributed it to a form of superstition, aided perhaps by the influence of the missionaries. He adds that the same forbearance and respect was observed by the heathen savages of King Philip's War who had never seen a Jesuit.—Parkman, *Half Century*, I, 72; George W. Chase, *op. cit.*, 31. Cf. "Memorial of the Present Deplorable State of New England," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 6th series, V (1879), 31; O'Callaghan, *Documents* (1856), IX, 105.

¹³ Cf. Joseph F. Thorning, *Religious Liberty in Transition* (1931), 9—20; Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1853), II, 5th book, 179 *et seq.* Riley, *op. cit.*, 94-95 explains how Baker and Coleman mistranslated this phrase *les ceremonies du baptême sont suppliées* as "the rites of baptism were administered" for "the ceremonies of baptism were supplied." Nevertheless, when the captives were brought back to New England, they were rebaptized by the Protestant ministers who would not accept Catholic baptism as valid. Congregationalists opposed infant baptism because they believed only the elect, in whom the sign of grace was manifest, should be admitted to the Sacrament.—Brooks Adams, *The Emancipation of Massachusetts* (1887), 8.

¹⁴ James Savage, *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England* (1892), IV, 563.

That Governor Vaudreuil seemed anxious that Williams should recover his daughter is evidenced by the fact that he sent him in company with a priest to visit the Macquas at Sault St. Louis.¹⁵ The priest, whose parish was near the mission of Caughnawaga, wrote to the Jesuit in charge asking him to bring Eunice thither. He received the reply that the Indians would sooner part with their own hearts than with Williams' child.¹⁶ Whereupon Williams returned to Montreal. Vaudreuil saw the Jesuits of the city and told them they must obtain the child and later went with Williams to Caughnawaga. The latter said that he was permitted to speak an hour or more with his daughter, but he was not allowed by the Jesuit to speak to any other prisoner. He heard her catechism, exhorted her not to forget her Protestant religion, and urged her to pray to God each day. His daughter in turn begged him to take her with him, but he returned to Montreal without securing her ransom.¹⁷ A few days after this he saw her for a few moments in the city before he left Montreal for Quebec.¹⁸

Why was the child not ransomed? Stephen Williams in his *Biographical Memoir* attributes the blame to the Indians.¹⁹ He

¹⁵ Sault St. Louis, as it was called during the French regime, or the mission of Caughnawaga, was founded by the Jesuits in the seventeenth century. It had its share in many of the religious and political events which fill the pages of Canadian history.—E. J. Devine, *Historic Caughnawaga* (1922), *passim*.

¹⁶ Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 52.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* Cf. Baker, *True Stories*, 136. According to the Reverend John Williams he was sent from Montreal to Quebec because he was too intimate with the English prisoners, thereby offsetting the work of the Jesuits. Douglas, *op. cit.*, 318, says that the captivity of Williams was purely nominal, but Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 54, says that the guards were so strict that his father was "hardly allowed to go out on necessary occasions." One reading the narrative nowadays in the light of past history comes to the conclusion that Williams with the characteristic Puritan self-righteousness was rather contentious. At Quebec, because he was again "preventing the conversion of the captives," the missionaries caused him to be sent to Château Riche, a suburb of the city. John Williams accuses the priests of even trying to seduce him "to popery."—Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 78.

¹⁹ Stephen Williams repeatedly speaks of the proselytizing of the captives by the priests.

says that no money could procure her redemption. Once the Indians promised the Governor that he might redeem her if he would procure for them an Indian girl in her place. After the Governor had sent several hundred miles to obtain the girl for them, the Indians refused to adhere to their bargain. They were also offered "one hundred pieces of eight,"²⁰ but they refused to give her up. The Governor's lady visited them and tried to secure her release, but all her efforts were useless.²¹ If one asks why the French did not compel the Indians to relinquish the little girl, the answer might be found in their anxiety to keep the friendship of their allies. They would not force them as they would have done in the case of a Frenchman.²² Parkman admits that the French authorities were in such fear of offending the Indians, even the mission Indians, that they rarely ventured to cross their interests or passions.²³

C. Alice Baker has painted a very mournful and graphic picture of the manner in which Eunice was converted. The Jesuit is depicted with slouch hat looped up at the sides, and wearing a long black cassock, with a rosary at his waist and a scourge in his hand. The "timid little English girl, scion of a grand old Puritan stock" cowers before him on her knees in abject terror.²⁴ In another passage, however, this author attributes the reluctance of Eunice in later years to return and remain in her home to the impression made

²⁰ Its value varied. Sometimes it was a Spanish silver dollar; in New England and Virginia it had a 6s.8d. value.—Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 54, Note 45.

²¹ Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 53, 85. It seems that after a captive had been adopted into a tribe it was difficult, if not impossible, to secure a release.—Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 46.

²² O'Callaghan, *Documents* (1855) IX, 441.

²³ Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 83. The whole situation seems to be summed up accurately in the "Memoir respecting Canada for the Marquis de Seignelay" in January, 1690, by M. de Denouville in O'Callaghan, *Documents*, IX, 440: "Independent of the interests of the Catholic religion which the said English and Dutch will never suffer to make any progress among the natives, regarding all our missionaries as our most bitter enemies, whom they will not tolerate within their reach, this commercial jealousy entertained by the English against the French is the principal cause that will ever render the two colonies incompatible and must convince us that the French ought not to trust the English or Dutch of that country."

²⁴ Baker, *True Stories*, 136.

upon the tender mind of the child by the dreadful scenes she had witnessed on the night of her capture.²⁵ In the light of later events it seems more probable that Eunice became enamored of Indian life.²⁶

In December, 1704, John Sheldon and John Wells of Deerfield, both of whom had relatives captives in Canada, obtained from Governor Dudley of Massachusetts²⁷ permission to go to Canada to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. It was decided that Captain John Livingston of Albany, who was well acquainted with Canada, should accompany them.²⁸ They reached Quebec early in 1705, and though they were treated courteously by Vaudreuil, they returned home with only five captives, among whom was Esther Williams, the sister of Eunice.²⁹ Drake says that Captain Courtemanche came with them for the purpose of treating for the exchange of French prisoners held by the English, but according

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 134. The account of Eunice Williams is written in an emotional style based rather on the imagination than on scientific historical data. For example, Eunice is pictured standing for hours watching Deacon French, the blacksmith of the village, as he beats into shape the plowshares bent by the stumps in the newly cleared lands. While the sparks fly upward from the flames, the little girl thinks on the verses in the Bible, "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward."—*Ibid.*, 132.

²⁶ Cf. Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 85; Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 137. It is well to keep in mind that there was very little difference between the mission of Caughnawaga and any neighboring parish.—Devine, *op. cit.*, 184.

²⁷ Dudley in his letter to Vaudreuil says he had about a hundred fifty prisoners. Benjamin Church, the doughty Indian fighter, in the spring of 1704 had led his fifth expedition against the French and Indians in Nova Scotia and Maine. Coming to Acadia he had burnt the village of Grand Pré and carried away with him enough captives to offset the number of English. —Henry P. Stearns, "Benjamin Church," *D. A. B.* (1930), IV, 99-100; Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 196-209; Benjamin Church, *History of King Philip's War*, edited by H. M. Dexter (1863), III, 99-120. Osgood, *op. cit.*, I, 416-420, gives an unbiased account. He states that after Church's expedition there were more French prisoners in Boston than the jail could hold.

²⁸ John Livingston was the son of Robert Livingston, the first ancestor of the family in America. His father had obtained great influence over the Indians and retained for many years the office of Secretary of Indian affairs.—*Appleton's Cyclopaedia* (1888), III, 741; *Collection de manuscrits à la Nouvelle-France* (1884), II, 426; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 80.

²⁹ According to *Les Ursulines des Trois-Rivières* (1888), I, 197, Eunice and Esther lived at the Boarding school at Trois-Rivières from 1704-1706.

to Parkman it was to "make himself acquainted with the country."⁸⁰ Vaudreuil in his letter to the French ministry at Versailles said he was sent both to facilitate an exchange of prisoners and to learn the state of affairs in Boston where the French prisoners were detained.⁸¹

Parkman and other historians would lead one to believe that the French, and above all the clergy, were responsible for the detention of New England captives in Canada, and claim that the motive was to transform them into Canadians by conversion and adoption.⁸² In the light of other evidence, however, it appears that the French were somewhat wary of the English. In June, 1689, Count de Frontenac, the Governor of New France wrote Richard Coote, the Earl of Bellomont, then Governor of New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, that the English had deceived the French several times by proposals of peace, whereupon the latter had surrendered persons without obtaining any in return. Moreover, he complained of the bad treatment accorded to Captain de Villieu⁸³ and several other prisoners in Boston. He added that he would no longer tolerate the detention of Captain Baptiste who was being held in chains.⁸⁴ Baptiste, however, was not released, and Williams was told when he first reached Montreal that he would receive his freedom only when Baptiste was liberated.⁸⁵ Dudley wanted all prisoners surrendered without regard to number or distinction,⁸⁶ and he refused to pay any ransom for those whom the French had bought from the Indians.⁸⁷ Livingston declared

⁸⁰ Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 209; Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 83; Le Jeune, *Dictionnaire*, I, 444.

⁸¹ *Collection de manuscrits*, II, 449.

⁸² Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 82.

⁸³ M. de Villieu, through the treachery of the British colonials, had been incarcerated.—Le Jeune, *op. cit.*, II, 798; *Collection de manuscrits*, II, 262, 282, 287, 288, 297, 337; Charlevoix, *op. cit.*, V, 210. Cf. Belknap, *New Hampshire* (1831), I, 137-138. He omits the imprisonment of Villieu and speaks of Villieu's hatred for New England.

⁸⁴ O'Callaghan, *Documents*, IV, 343-344. The Boston merchants regarded Captain Jean Baptiste Guyon, a French naval officer, as a pirate.—Osgood, *op. cit.*, I, 418.

⁸⁵ Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 54-55.

⁸⁶ O'Callaghan, *Documents*, IX, 772.

⁸⁷ Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 82; Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 212-213.

that the refusal of Dudley to release Baptiste was the only thing that prevented the parties from coming to an agreement then and there.³⁸

In the summer of 1705 Joseph Dudley sent Captain Vetch and Samuel Hill along with his son William to Canada for resumption of negotiations regarding the exchange of prisoners. Captain Courtemanche was sent back with them. They were to present to Vaudreuil a treaty of neutrality drawn up by Dudley.³⁹ According to Parkman they were received at Quebec with a courtesy qualified by an extreme caution, for fear they would spy out the secrets of the land.⁴⁰ Again the number of prisoners obtained was very few. Stephen Williams, the son of the Reverend John Williams, was one of the number who set sail for Boston on October 12, 1705.⁴¹ Again the question presents itself, why were not more captives released? In "A Memorial of the Present Deplorable State of New England . . ." by Philopolites⁴² the indictment is made that the Governor sent his son with Captain Vetch to Canada under a pretense of redeeming captives, but in reality to trade with the French and Indians. Consequently, they had brought home but few captives leaving the principal ones behind that they might have the occasion of going again.⁴³ They brought

³⁸ Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 210. Cf. Grievances of Vaudreuil set forth in letter to Dudley, Quebec, 26 March, 1705, in *Collection de manuscrits*, II, 428-433.

³⁹ *Collection de manuscrits*, II, 449-450; Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 210.

⁴⁰ Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 84. On July 9, 1706, a letter came from M. de Pontchartrain, minister at Versailles, which approved of the courtesy of Vaudreuil to Dudley's messengers, but warned that Dudley and Vetch should have been prevented from obtaining information of the state of affairs, as the latter had boasted that he was "at present better informed than those who reside there."—O'Callaghan, *Documents*, IX, 779.

⁴¹ Sheldon, *op. cit.* (1895), I, 330-331. At the importunity of the father, Governor Vaudreuil had finally prevailed upon the Indians to sell the boy for thirty crowns, though for a while they had demanded forty.—Stephen Williams, *op. cit.*, 59-60; 107-110. He had been sent to live with his father at Château Riche.

⁴² Abusive letters incited and perhaps compiled by Cotton Mather.—*Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 6th series, V (1879), 36-131.

⁴³ *Ibid.* Vetch was tried by the General Court of Massachusetts for illegal trading in 1706 and fined. Carrying his case to England, he escaped re-

back, however, counter proposals from Vaudreuil in regard to the neutrality treaty, but those were not acceptable to the General Court of Massachusetts.⁴⁴

In the meantime, negotiations again reverting to the question of exchange, Sheldon of Deerfield was sent a second time to Quebec in March, 1706. Vaudreuil in his letter to Dudley, dated June 2, of the same year, took precautions that he might not be cheated of the number of French prisoners released by the English. As Dudley had made no mention of freeing Baptiste, Vaudreuil said that he would treat two of his captives with the same rigor unless Baptiste and La Faroe were exchanged. In regard to those captives in the hands of the Indians, he would do all in his power to withdraw them as had been his practice heretofore.⁴⁵ Dudley now consented to release Captain Baptiste, whereupon Williams was exchanged for him.⁴⁶ Being unable to redeem Eunice in spite of his exertions, Reverend Mr. Williams with his two children, Samuel and Warham, in company with fifty-four other released captives, left Quebec in the latter part of October, 1706.⁴⁷

No other captive was to cause so much trouble between the two governments as Eunice Williams. Colonel Peter Schuyler,⁴⁸ who

trial.—J. Bartlett Brebner, "Samuel Vetch," *D. A. B.* (1936), XIX, 260-261. Drake accuses New York of maintaining a criminal neutrality as the merchants at Albany were getting rich by trading with the Indians.—Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 220, 239. Cf. Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, II, 141-142.

⁴⁴ Samuel Adams Drake, *op. cit.*, 211.

⁴⁵ *Collection de manuscrits*, II, 453-454.

⁴⁶ Parkman, *Half-Century*, I, 84; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 83, 85.

⁴⁷ Williams, *op. cit.*, 83; Baker, *True Stories*, 188. John Williams returned to Deerfield at the request of the inhabitants though during the winter he preached in the churches of Boston and prepared with Cotton Mather's help *The Redeemed Captive Returning to Zion* (1707). It won high approval as a testimony of Congregational fortitude against "Popish Poisons."—Justin Winsor, ed., *Narrative and Critical History of America* (1887), V, 185-187.

⁴⁸ In the difficulties between the French and the English Peter Schuyler conducted all negotiations as he had a remarkable influence over the Iroquois.—*Appleton's Cyclopaedia* (1900), V, 11. In 1690 he had expressed the conviction that only the conquest of New France would arrest the expeditions of the French and their Indian allies against the new pioneer settlements. In sympathy with the New Englanders and detesting the

figured so prominently in Indian affairs in New York, and his youngest brother John were much interested in the restoration of Eunice.⁴⁹ This is shown in a letter dated February 18, 1706-7, to Colonel Partridge, commander at Hatfield, a town north of Deerfield:

As to Mr. Williams' Daughter, our spies are returned, who as they were hunting, saw Mr. Williams' daughter with the Indian who owns her. She is in good health, but seems unwilling to returne, and the Indian not very willing to part with her, she being as he says, a pretty girl but perhaps he may Exchange her if he can gett a very pretty Indian in her Rome, which he must first see. You may assure Mr. Williams I will do all that lays in my power to serve him, as I have formally wrott to him, and indeed to all others that are prisoners.⁵⁰

In the spring of 1709 the English made one strong and united effort for the final overthrow of the French in America. John Livingston, who led a company of Iroquois Indians in the expedition, was sent overland to Quebec with St. Castin to inform Vaudreuil that Acadia had fallen into English hands. In 1710 he wrote:

I demanded of ye Governor Mr. William daughter, he told me it was not in his power to get her; she was among the Indians and as for ye prisoners in their hands he could not engage for their exchange, for they were allies.⁵¹

Colonel Walton, leader of the New Hampshire battalion, decoyed a small party of savages on the Kennebec. After the

fraudulent methods of the Albany merchants, he had opposed the neutrality of New York and seemed to hold himself responsible for the safety of the pioneer settlements.—Richard E. Day, "Peter Schuyler," *D. A. B.* (1935), XVI, 476-477. Cf. Drake, *op. cit.*, 239.

⁴⁹ Francis M. Thompson, "Massachusetts Colony and Peter and John Schuyler," *Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association* (1905), IV, 325.

⁵⁰ Baker, *True Stories*, 137.

⁵¹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 55, quoting Manuscript Journal in Public Record Office, London, printed in *Calendar of State Papers*.

Norridgewock chief was killed, his squaw and her children were taken to Boston and sold for forty pounds.⁵² Dudley proposed to send this squaw and one of her children northward promising her and her family freedom if she secured the release of Eunice. In the meantime he notified Colonel Schuyler at Albany of his interview with the Abnaki squaw and asked him to be on the lookout for her. Colonel Schuyler wrote:

May it please your Excellency

Your Excellency's Letter of ye 7th and 10th Currant for Expresses have Received together with five letters from Mons Vaudreuil govr of Candida which have delivered to ye french officer Dayeville⁵³ who goes from hence ye (19) Instant and have taken his Receipt for three letters as your Designed which is here Inclosed as to what your Excellency mentions Relating to Mr. Williams his daughter, the squaw nor she is not come her yet nor have I heard anything of her coming altho I shall be very glad to see them and do assure your Excellency If they come together or be it ye squaw alone I shall use all possible means to get the child exchanged Either as your Excellency proposes or what other way the squaw will be most willing to comply with. In the meantime shall Inform my Selfe by all opportunities whether the said Squaw & child be coming here or if they be any where near by. Your Excellency may depend that whatever I can do for ye obtaining of ye so Child shall at no time be wanting. So shall take leave to subscrib my Selfe

Your Excellency's
Most humble & Obedient Servant
P. Schuyler

Albany, Dec. 19(?) 1712.⁵⁴

That the Abnaki squaw was faithful to her charge is evidenced by a letter from Father Meriel to Johnson Harmon of York, Maine, who was returning to New England on parole to be ex-

⁵² *Ibid.*, II, 55, quoting *Council Records*, Nov. 15, 1711, V, 470.

⁵³ Jean Baptiste Dagueille, Priscilla Storer's husband.—*Supra*, 51, 52.

⁵⁴ Baker, *True Stories*, 141-142.

changed for "Boveney."⁵⁵ This letter is dated Montreal, June 26, 1711, and reads as follows:

To Mr. Johnson Harmon at Shamblee:

Sir,

Since you are gone, a Squaw of the nation of the Abnaki is come from Boston. She has a pass from your Governour. She go's about getting a little girl, daughter of Mr. John Williams, the Lord Marquis of Vaudreuil helps her as he can. The business is very hard because the girl belongs to Indians of another sort,⁵⁶ and the master of the English girl is now at Albany. You may tell your Governour that the squaw can't be at Boston at the time appointed and that she desires him not to be impatient for her return, and meantime to take good care of her two papows. The Same Lord Chief Governour of Canada has insured me in case she may not prevail with the Mohoggs for Eunice Williams he shall send hume four English persons in his power for an Exchange in the Room of the two Indian children. You see well, Sir your Governour must not disregard such a generous proffer as according to his noble birth and obliging genious Our maker, Else he would betray little affection for his own people. . . .⁵⁷

Months later the squaw reappeared at Albany, bringing back word that Eunice refused to leave her master and that he was loath to compel her. Whereupon Dudley accepted the four English persons in exchange for the squaw and her papooses.⁵⁸

In the spring of 1711, Vetch, who had been made military commander⁵⁹ at Port Royal, now called Annapolis, had brought Father Justinian, curé at Port Royal, to Boston as a captive. He suggested to the Council that they might exchange him for Eunice

⁵⁵ French ensign, Seigneur de Vercheres.—*Ibid.*, 359.

⁵⁶ The Indians of St. Louis or Caughnawaga were Christianized Mohawks from New York.

⁵⁷ Baker, *True Stories*, 366.

⁵⁸ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 56; Baker, *True Stories*, 140.

⁵⁹ Drake, *op. cit.*, 261.

or some other valuable prisoner.⁶⁰ Father Justinian was exchanged, but not for Eunice.⁶¹

In 1712 Lieutenant Samuel Williams, Eunice's brother, was chosen to go to Quebec for an exchange of prisoners as he knew how to speak French.⁶² It may have been that Dudley sent by him the following letter to Governor Vaudreuil which reads:

I have in my Keeping one Indian sachem of Quebec one other sachem of your Indians near in blood and kindred to the woman that has Mr. William's daughter which I will exchange for her or otherwise I will never set free.⁶³

Samuel returned with nine captives, but Eunice was not among the number.⁶⁴

In the spring of 1713 John Schuyler was sent to Montreal, but in spite of his "indefatigable pains" he could not induce Eunice to return. Moreover, she was now married to a young Indian named John de Rogers, but called Amrusus. In the memorial which Schuyler sent to Dudley after his return he emphasized the precautions he had taken that he might not be imposed upon or deceived. He had upbraided the priest for marrying them; whereupon the priest had related his unwillingness to do so, even to the extent of leaving the fort to avoid their importunities, but when they protested that they would live together unmarried, he had then joined them in wedlock. Schuyler testifies to his endeavors and those of the priest to induce Eunice to return home. Being unsuccessful, he then asked her to pay a visit to her father. He promised her upon his word of honor that, if she would go, he would convey her to New England and be responsible for her return. As he could get no response from her, her husband an-

⁶⁰ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 55, quoting *Council Records*, 1708-1717, V, 265; Baker, *True Stories*, 374.

⁶¹ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 55.

⁶² Baker, *True Stories*, 53, 242. Samuel, during his captivity was received into the church by Father Meriel at Montreal. He soon retracted saying he had been forced to embrace the Catholic religion.—*Ibid.*, 195-196; John Williams, *op. cit.*, 51-69.

⁶³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 56.

⁶⁴ Baker, *True Stories*, 53.

swered that if her father had not married again she would have gone to see him long before this. After a useless conversation lasting about two hours Schuyler took his leave.⁶⁵

After the peace of Utrecht in 1713 the Reverend John Williams and Major John Stoddard⁶⁶ were sent to obtain an exchange of prisoners. They were joined by Captain Thomas Baker, Martin Kellog, and two others, and arrived in Quebec February 16, 1714.⁶⁷ The efforts of Mr. Williams to obtain his daughter were again unavailing. On March 14, 1714, M. Junceur by the government's orders discoursed with Mr. Williams' daughter and with her Indian relations, who said they would let her decide for herself respecting her return. Stoddard relates that M. Vaudreuil promised that, if the Indians consented, he would compel her to return.⁶⁸

On June 2, the Indian chiefs of Caughnawaga came to see Mr. Williams and Mr. Stoddard at their request. There also appeared two Jesuits from Caughnawaga, who said that it had not been their custom to compel captives to return after the Indians had adopted them, for they were then no longer considered prisoners but children. In this case they left them free to do as they chose.⁶⁹ A letter of the Reverend Mr. Williams would seem to indicate that Eunice did not wish to return:

Mount Real, June 1, 1714

Sir, . . . I think the time here very long. There has been a great mortality of children, by a cold attended with a terrible cough. As for myself, it is the pleasure of a holy God to exercise me with sorrow upon sorrow. It was not till Hartford election day that I could see my child. And she is yet obstinately resolved to live and dye here, and

⁶⁵ For Memorial in full see Appendix I, 223.

⁶⁶ John Stoddard, son of the Reverend Solomon Stoddard and Esther Warham Mather, was a member of the governor's council and commander-in-chief of the western division of Massachusetts. His sister Esther was the mother of the revivalist, Jonathan Edwards.—"Stoddard's Journal," *op. cit.*, V, 22; Henry Parker, "Solomon Stoddard," *D. A. B.* (1936), XVIII, 59; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia* (1888), V, 697.

⁶⁷ "Stoddard's Journal," *op. cit.*, V, 26.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, V, 33; Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 94-95.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, V, 34.

will not so much as give me one pleasant look. It's beyond my ability, in the contents of a letter, to make you understand how ours here are besotted. We are like to be very unsuccessful. We take the best methods we can and put on all the patience we have; but the English are so naturalized to the customs and manners of the French and Indians, and have forgotten the English tongue, and are so many of them married, or gotten into nunneries, etc., that I think it would be far easier to gain twice the number of French and Indians to go with us than English. Governor Vaudrel continues very courteous to us. I beg your prayers. . . . We need all your prayers.

John Williams⁷⁰

Stoddard enumerates various obstacles put in the way in order that he and Williams might not obtain the release of the prisoners, and he attributes these difficulties to the machinations of the Governor and the clergy.⁷¹ He does say, however, that they "visited some English nuns who were well pleased with their present circumstances."⁷²

In contradiction to the indictments of Captain Stoddard the Governor said that he gave Stoddard and Williams *une grande liberté*, that all persons were told they could return if they so wished, and a proclamation was issued on August 14, with orders to be read, published, and posted at Quebec, Montreal, and Three Rivers. It was sent, moreover, to all the Côtés and Seigneuries in the country so that no English person, man, woman or child, might be ignorant that a boat was waiting to take him home. Food and carriages would be furnished those wishing to return.⁷³

Known as a defender of Congregationalism and a decrier of everything Catholic, Williams was bound to be deeply affected by the loss of Eunice. In 1710 Governor Dudley had proclaimed a fast day to pray "our prisoners in the hands of the enemy may not be poisoned with the Romish religion."⁷⁴ Her father never

⁷⁰ *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 6th series, V (1892), 295.

⁷¹ Stoddard's Journal, *op. cit.*, V, *passim*.

⁷² *Ibid.*, V, 29.

⁷³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, I, 96, quoting *Quebec Documents*, III, 4.

⁷⁴ Riley, *op. cit.*, 167, quoting *New Hampshire Provincial Papers*, II, 607.

ceased to pray for her return to the religion to which he was so zealously attached.⁷⁵ The whole community joined him through prayer-meetings and sermons. After his death, which occurred in 1729, this interest in Eunice continued.⁷⁶

Finally, in 1740, through the efforts of the Schuylers, Eunice with her husband came to Albany. Her brother Stephen at Longmeadow was at once notified, and he came to see her accompanied by his brother Eleazer, minister at Mansfield, and his brother-in-law, the Reverend Mr. Joseph Meacham of Coventry. With great difficulty Stephen persuaded her and her husband to visit him at Longmeadow. Crowds flocked to see her, including the great revivalist, Jonathan Edwards, who came down from Northampton.⁷⁷ Stephen noted in his diary for September, 1740, "Friday 5 Cluttered & full of care & company joy & sorrow hope & fear."⁷⁸

On Sunday Eunice attended the public worship in her brother's church both in the morning and in the afternoon. This concession gave them hope. Before leaving she promised she would come again and spend a long time. In July of the next year she came again with her husband and two children. Because of the measles in the neighborhood Stephen sent her to Coventry to her sister Esther's home. She also went to Mansfield where her brother Eleazer lived. Here Solomon Williams, her cousin, preached a sermon in her behalf.⁷⁹ It was at this time of her second visit that the legislature of Massachusetts offered her land if she would tarry in New England, but she refused, saying that it would en-

⁷⁵ While John Williams in his *Redeemed Captive*, *passim*, spoke repeatedly of the courtesy shown him by the French and their clergy, he always had a lurking suspicion of the priests, and so, in season, and out of season, he argued "against popery." Cf. Douglas, *New England and New France*, 316.

⁷⁶ John H. Hanson, *The Lost Prince* (1854), 180-181.

⁷⁷ The Great Awakening was then in full vigor. Cf. *infra*, 84.

⁷⁸ "Extract from Diary of the Reverend Stephen Williams," Baker, *True Stories*, 387.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 390; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 62. For text of sermon see Appendix II, 225. Upon the occasion of this visit she was the subject of special prayers and the principal cause of a fast day.—W. de Love, *The Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England* (1895), 280, Note 1.

danger her soul.⁸⁰ Her brother Warham, minister at Watertown, also came to Longmeadow to see her. There are no details of her third visit since the records from 1742-1748 are missing.⁸¹ It was not until twenty years later, on June 30, 1761, that she came again, accompanied by her husband, her daughter, Katherine, and Katherine's husband, the Grand Chief Onastegen (Annastegen), and others. This time they encamped in the orchard behind the parsonage. When bidding farewell in the parlor of Stephen's house, Eunice and her daughter were so affected that they both shed tears. This caused Stephen to terminate his diary with the prayer:

Oh that God would touch their hearts and encline them to turn to their Friends and to embrace ye religion of Jesus Christ.⁸²

The last glimpse of Eunice is in a letter written or dictated by her in 1761:

My beloved brother, once in captivity with me. . . . We are now both very old and are still permitted by the goodness of God to live in the land of the living. This may be the last time you may hear from me. . . . I trust we may meet in Heaven with all our godly relatives.⁸³

Eunice died in November, 1785, at the age of ninety-five. Her descendants continue through the line of her daughter Mary, who had married Louis Satagaienton. At the death of Mary, which had occurred in 1779, her husband took the name of Williams in her memory. Their only child, Thomas, had a numerous progeny, so that the register at Caughnawaga, 1892, listed the descendants of Eunice Williams still living at the old historic Jesuit mission as a hundred twenty-five.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Sheldon, *op. cit.*, I, 348; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 62.

⁸¹ Baker, *True Stories*, 391.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 393.

⁸³ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 63.

⁸⁴ Devine, *op. cit.*, 420-421.

FREEDOM, ABIGAIL, AND MARTHA FRENCH

Probably the most noted among the descendants of the New England converts was Joseph Octave Plessis, first Archbishop of Canada under English rule, and no less renowned in his country than his contemporary, John Carroll, in the United States. He was the grandson of Martha French, who with her father and mother and five other children was among those captured at Deerfield in 1703. Mrs. Mary (Catlin) French and her infant son were killed during the retreat. John Sheldon from his second expedition to Canada (1706) brought back Thomas French and his two eldest children, Mary, aged seventeen, and Thomas, fourteen.⁸⁵

Freedom, eleven years of age when she arrived in Canada, was placed in the family of the French merchant, Le Ber of Montreal. On April 6, 1706, Father Meriel baptized her, giving her the name of Marie Françoise. It appears that she continued to live with the Le Bers until February 6, 1713, when, being twenty-one years old, she was married to Paul Daveluy of the village of St. Lambert.⁸⁶ Her name occurs in a list of those present at the marriages of some of her English friends and relatives.⁸⁷ From her issued several French families *de bonne renommée*.⁸⁸

Abigail, the youngest of Thomas French's daughters, was adopted by an Iroquois chief. She was later discovered living with the Indians at Caughnawaga. Because of her tender years at the time of her capture, it had been easy for her to acquire the language and customs of the Indians.⁸⁹ It would be interesting to know if the two little girls from Deerfield, Eunice Williams and Abigail French, grew up at the old mission together in love and friendship. Abigail never left Sault St. Louis; she lived and

⁸⁵ Baker, *True Stories*, 203, 283; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 80-81. Thomas French was blacksmith, selectman, and town clerk at Deerfield. His house was not burned, and so the town records were saved. Soon after his return French was made deacon of the church in Deerfield. In 1709 he married the widow of Benoni Stebbins, who had been killed during the Indian raid.

⁸⁶ Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 82.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 231; II, 71; Baker, *True Stories*, 283.

⁸⁸ Tanguay, *Dictionnaire* (1887), II, 253.

⁸⁹ Jean Baptiste Ferland, *Mgr. Joseph-Octave Plessis, Evêque de Québec* (1878), 8.

died there unmarried.⁹⁰ Deacon French must have known about his child from the Reverend Mr. Williams, but no communication of Mr. French with his children in Canada has been found.⁹¹

Martha, aged eight, remained with the Indians five years before she was given by them to the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame. She was baptized *sous condition* by Father Meriel under the name of Marthe Marguerite, January 23, 1707.⁹² At the age of sixteen she was married to Jacques Roy of St. Laurent, November 24, 1711. Her sister, Freedom, was present and signed the marriage register.⁹³ Martha had several children by this marriage.⁹⁴ After her husband's death she was united again in wedlock, May 4, 1733, to Jean Louis Ménard (Mesnard), who was also of the parish of St. Laurent. There were three daughters from this union and of these the second, Marie Louise, at the age of sixteen married Joseph Amable Plessis (Plessy), an iron worker of Montreal. Of this union was born Joseph Octave Plessis. From his god-fearing parents the future bishop learned the virtues of simplicity, honesty, and devoutness. Born in 1763, at the time when Canada passed into English hands, he was to be the valiant successor of Bishops Briand and Hubert in the difficult days of the transition period. How well he accomplished his difficult rôle is attested by his appointment as Archbishop of Canada. A devoted son of his Church and a loyal citizen to the English government, he warranted the choice that had been made.⁹⁵

Recalling the ancestry of Archbishop Plessis brings home again the contribution which so many of the Anglo-American prisoners

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹¹ It must, however, be borne in mind that from Deerfield there was very little means of correspondence with the home government or with the authorities in Canada.

⁹² Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 83.

⁹³ Baker, *True Stories*, 283-284.

⁹⁴ Tanguay, *Dictionnaire* (1890), VII, 73.

⁹⁵ Baker, *True Stories*, 284; Coleman, *op. cit.*, II, 86; Tanguay, *Dictionnaire* (1889), VI, 390-391; Le Jeune, *op. cit.*, II, 447-448. It is related by Archbishop Plessis in his "Journal" that when he went to Caughnawaga to say Mass, he used to watch the Indians file into the church. He could always distinguish his venerable aunt, though her face was hidden by her blanket, by her erect stature and manner of walking.—Ferland, *Plessis*, 8.

brought to the land of their adoption, but there is a note of sorrow and regret that two Christian nations, instead of joining hands to win the continent from barbarism, should have engaged in such bitter religious antagonism and race hatred. In fact, the hostility of the English frontier spirit towards things French became a fundamental attitude.⁹⁶ The legacy of enmity, bequeathed through the intercolonial wars, augmented the spirit of intolerance in this country. That such was the case is substantiated by the storm of protest that greeted the Quebec Act.⁹⁷ On the other hand, the study of the captive converts brings out some parallels and contrasts. For a proper understanding of the subject the differences of purpose in the two colonizing peoples must be kept in mind. The English identified themselves with the country of their adoption and became Americans from the beginning; French-Canadian nationality was not born until 1763.⁹⁸

Both the English and French, however, believed in a theocratic state in which religion penetrated and controlled every phase of life. Theirs were cultures predominantly religious and Christian. "The whole philosophy of this early American culture was religious in its origin, its motivation and its expression."⁹⁹ The Church in Canada reared a people religious in spirit, moral in behavior, but backward in material advancement and individual initiative. In New France Roman Catholicism, with its dogma and its ritual of worship, continued to retain its influence among the people. The Indians embraced it more readily as it was more comprehensible

⁹⁶ Jones, *op. cit.*, 80. According to E. Hamon, *Les Canadiens français de la Nouvelle-Angleterre* (1891), 36-39, Americans continue merely to tolerate the Canadian-French; there is no love for them.

⁹⁷ Charles H. Metzger, *The Quebec Act: A Primary Cause of the American Revolution* (1936), *passim*; John M. Lenhart, *Catholics and the American Declaration of Independence, 1775-1776* (1934), *passim*; John Gilmary Shea, "Why Is Canada not a Part of the United States?" *United States Catholic Historical Magazine* [hereafter referred to as *U. S. C. H. M.*], III (1890), 113-127.

⁹⁸ Douglas, *New England and New France*, 160; William A. L. Styles, "How Loyal is Quebec?" *The Eikon*, XII (1939), 42-45.

⁹⁹ Wilfred Parsons, S.J., "Philosophical Factors in the Integration of American Culture," *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Convention of the Jesuits Philosophical Association* (September, 1941), 28-29.

to them than the metaphysical dogmas of Calvinism.¹⁰⁰ The heritage of the past, as it exists even today with its French customs and its religious practices, makes the province of Quebec unique in the annals of history.

On the other hand, the Congregational Church of New England saw no incongruity between serving God and making money. The stern Puritan virtues made for success, but the fervor of pristine piety grew cold under the regimen, and with the increase of wealth and material prosperity came the natural disintegration of the Puritan system.¹⁰¹

In their attempt to achieve worldly success and to extend their boundaries, however, the English colonies found themselves threatened by the aborigines and the French Catholics of Canada. The latter, aware that they were an obstacle to English expansion and trade, anticipated the English and took the initiative. Abbé Ferland goes so far as to defend the hostile raids of the French into the English territory. What else could they do? he asks. Were they to permit the Iroquois, instigated by the English, to swoop down upon them, burn their villages, profane their churches, destroy their crops, consign to the flames their women, children, and aged, and to carry the torch and tomahawk throughout the whole region of Montreal? They, the people of New France, were a handful of men in comparison with the population of New England and New York. Either they must defend their homes and their families or suffer themselves to be annihilated.¹⁰²

Ferland's indictment may have been too severe. The truth of the matter is that humaneness is not a conspicuous virtue when countries are engaged in a struggle for supremacy, and no nation can lay claim to a monopoly of virtue. The French-Canadian officials cannot, therefore, be entirely absolved from the part they played in these New England raids. To arraign the missionary priest, however, as Parkman, Bancroft, and others have done, as being responsible for or countenancing the bloody deeds perpetrated is unjustifiable. If these French priests prayed for the

¹⁰⁰ James Douglas, *Old France in the New World* (1905), 248.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 500-517; Gustav A. Koch, *Republican Religion* (1933), 26.

¹⁰² Ferland, *Cours d'histoire* (1865), II, 206.

success of the expeditions, said Mass, and heard the confessions of the Indian warriors, they were doing no more than the Catholic army or navy chaplain does today when he accompanies his contingent to battle; yet no one in our times would blame either the Protestant or Catholic clergyman for the horrors committed in warfare.

If the conflict of that era be viewed in a spirit of tolerance, one thing seems clear—that the innocent victims of war were kindly treated once they reached Canadian shores. The captives undoubtedly owed gratitude to those who paid their ransom, gave them hospitality, and made them sharers of religious and social life. That they recognized these benefits and returned gratitude these pages amply show. To their testimony, however, it is a pleasure to add this excerpt from a recent letter of Mr. William Bond Wheelwright, a relative of Mother Esther Wheelwright and a member of the tenth generation from the founder of the Wheelwright family in America:

Regardless of the ancient antipathies between Protestant and Catholic peoples, the Wheelwrights must have been thankful that their daughter had found a useful vocation and peace of mind.

I am sure that my family of recent generations have felt great pride in the noble life and service of our distinguished kinswoman and gratitude to her saviors, the Ursulines.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Letter to the author, January 4, 1942.

PART II

TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

CHAPTER V

CATHOLICS IN THE COLONIES BEFORE AND DURING THE REVOLUTION

Before the converts in the national period are considered, it is advisable to review the status of religion in the United States before and during the Revolutionary period. This retrospect is necessary for the understanding of the growth of the Catholic Church under a reasonably tolerant government. The history of every nation is the outgrowth of its ultimate conception of reality.¹ The late Dr. J. Franklin Jameson in his article, "The American Acta Sanctorum," insists that to interpret the American mind, and heart, and soul, as developed throughout three hundred years, one must have as a basis for such interpretation a thorough understanding of American religious history.² Professor H. K. Rowe in his *History of Religion in the United States* maintains that among the social factors which have shaped America religion holds a prominent place despite the fact that at times it has been overshadowed and subordinated to political and economic forces. Its influence has been conservative as well as constructive; it has held tenaciously to that which seemed valuable in the past.³

One of the most striking contributions of America to the science of government is the idea of religious liberty as guaranteed by the Constitution.⁴ The clause pertaining to religious liberty in the

¹ Christopher Dawson, *Progress and Religion* (1929), 234.

² J. Franklin Jameson, "The American Acta Sanctorum," *American Historical Review*, XIII (1907-1908), 286-303.

³ H. K. Rowe, *The History of Religion in the United States* (1924), Preface, vii.

⁴ Sanford Cobb, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America* (1902), 1-18.

sixth article of the Constitution is reaffirmed in definite language in the First Amendment. Religious equality for all is one of the strong points in the Bill of Rights. Anti-Christian forces have not succeeded here because they have no official support from the State,⁵ and constitutional liberty has promoted the rapid growth of the Catholic Church. Though development may be attributed in great measure to the waves of Catholic immigrants coming to this country, still the increase through conversions has been phenomenal.⁶ James MacCaffrey is of the opinion that conversions have been more frequent in the United States than in the countries of the Old World.⁷ Others go so far as to say this is a convert country.⁸

Previous to the Revolution the future of the Catholic Church was dark. The Toleration Act passed (1689) in the time of William and Mary extended only to the Protestant groups. The Catholic religion was proscribed in the colonies and a series of penal laws against Catholics was passed. Pennsylvania was the only British province where public worship was permitted Catholics. Even here, because of pressure, Catholics were disfranchised equally with disbelievers in the Trinity.⁹ In Maryland, Lord Baltimore's free soil for Christianity, Governor John Seymour, 1704, gave orders that the sheriff of St. Mary's County lock up the "popish chapel," and "keep the key thereof."¹⁰ By a statute passed in the reign of Queen Anne chapels might be attached to the manor houses or private dwellings, and private services conducted. Here the few Jesuit priests on the mission maintained the flock as well as they could, but because of political

⁵ Cf. Joseph Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (1891), II, 615-618.

⁶ Henry K. Carroll, *The Religious Forces of the United States* (1893), Introduction, Iviii.

⁷ James MacCaffrey, *History of the Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century, 1789-1908* (1909), I, 294.

⁸ Cf. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1862), II, 33; John J. Meng, "A Century of American Catholicism," *C. H. R.*, XXVII (April, 1941), 57, 61-64, 67.

⁹ Cobb, *op. cit.*, 482-483.

¹⁰ Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, I, 356.

and economic degradation under colonial government the fervor of Catholics in early post-revolutionary days was at a low ebb.¹¹

Such conditions were bound to bring about great losses to the Catholic faith. The estimated number of 25,000 Catholics at the time of John Carroll's appointment as Prefect-Apostolic, 1784, must have been a mere fraction of those who had migrated to the English colonies during the two centuries preceding the Revolution. Wherever a priest could be stationed, conversions were usually made.¹² but the only official recognition of such a conversion within the colonies is that of Sir Lionel Brittin (Brittain) at Philadelphia in 1707. This became known because of the furor it occasioned.

After William and Mary became the English sovereigns, new impetus and vigor were infused into the Anglican Church. In January, 1701, the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts was reorganized to promote the cause of Anglicanism and to establish an Anglican episcopate in the American colonies.¹³ The

¹¹ Peter Guilday, *The Life and Times of John Carroll* (1922), 770. As late as 1774 Catholics were ineligible for election to the Assembly; so when Charles Carroll of Carrollton became a member of the Provincial Convention of Maryland in 1774, his selection was in violation of the written law. Cf. "Federal Constitutional Provision with Respect to Religion," *Records*, XXXIX (1928), 1-27.

¹² The greater number of those in Maryland at the time of the Revolution were converts of the Jesuit priests who defied all persecution and continued their work amid great difficulties.—Thomas C. Hall, *The Religious Background of American Culture* (1930), 256. Governor Hart of Maryland writing to the Bishop of London, July 10, 1714, would prevent the Jesuits from entering the houses of dying persons because of the many "Proselytes" they made. The reason he gave for the number of converts to Rome was the predominance of unworthy men in the Anglican ministry. Consequently, he emphasized the need of bishops to correct the evil.—William S. Perry, *Papers Relating to the History of the Church in Maryland* (1878), IV, 78, 80-81.

¹³ Thomas Bray in 1669 had been sent over to America to report upon the condition of the Church of England. He published a report entitled "A Memorial Representing the State Religion in the Continent of North America." It was an appeal for episcopal regulation and resulted in the formation in England of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts which was incorporated by a royal charter under the great seal on June 16, 1701.—Mary L. Greene, *The Development of Religious Liberty in Connecticut* (1905), 176. Cf. Arthur L. Cross, *The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies* (1902), 36.

next year the Society sent John Talbot and George Keith as missionaries to the colonies.¹⁴ Under date of January, 1707-1708, the Reverend John Talbot, Episcopal minister of Saint Mary's Church in Burlington, New Jersey,¹⁵ wrote to the secretary of the London Society:

. . . Arise O Lord, Jesus Christ, and help us, and deliver us for Thine honor! . . . There's an Independency set up again at Elizabethtown, Anabaptism at Burlington, and the Popish Mass in Philadelphia. I thought the Quakers would be the first to let it in, particularly Mr. Penn, for if he has any religion 'tis that. But thus to tolerate all without control is the way to have none at all. . . .¹⁶

On February 14, 1707-1708, he wrote to George Keith, who had returned to England in the fall of 1704:

. . . I saw Mr. Bradford (the printer) at New York; he tells me mass is set up and read publicly in Philadelphia, and several people are turned to it, among which are Lionel Brittain, the Church warden, is one and his son is another. I thought that Popery would come in amongst Friends, the Quakers, as soon as any way.¹⁷

¹⁴ George Keith had come to this country in 1684 as a recognized leader of the Society of Quakers. Later on, becoming involved in disputes with his own sect in Philadelphia, he returned to London where Penn pronounced him an apostate and dismissed him from the Society; whereupon he became an Episcopalian and was ordained by the Bishop of London. In 1702 in company with Talbot he returned to America as the first missionary of the newly organized Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. —Leonard W. Bacon, *A History of American Christianity* (1897), 118-119. Cf. *Appleton's Cyclopaedia* (1888), III, 502.

¹⁵ Charles C. Tiffany, *A History of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America* (1907), 191. Talbot became conspicuous in the episcopal annals of the colonial church in New Jersey.

¹⁶ George M. Hills, *History of the Church in Burlington, New Jersey* (1876), 78.

¹⁷ Francis L. Hawks and William S. Perry, ed., *Documentary History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* (1863), I, 37. Cf. Martin I. J. Griffin, "Lionell Brittin, Pennsylvania's First Catholic Convert," *American Catholic Historical Researches* [hereafter referred to as *Researches*], VII (1890), 51.

Who were this Lionel Brittin, his son, and the several others who had turned to the Mass? Lionel Brittin was a Quaker who had left England in 1680 and had settled on the Delaware River at a spot near what is now Burlington, New Jersey.¹⁸ When he moved to Philadelphia in 1688, he severed connections with the Society of Friends, joined the Anglican establishment, and became a church warden.¹⁹ During the Christmastide, 1707-1708, he was received into the Catholic Church. There is no record where the Mass referred to was said, or by whom, but it is most probable that it was said by one of the Jesuits from Bohemia Manor who administered to the Catholics in the vicinity of Philadelphia.²⁰ The late Martin I. J. Griffin, so devoted to establishing historical truth, could find no record of the son after years of investigation; in his will Lionel Brittin makes no mention of him. Griffin conjectures that the son must have died before Sir Lionel made his will in 1721, or else that the son referred to might have been a son-in-law, Philip Kearney, who had married Rebecca Brittin. The latter, who died in 1745, was interred in the Friends' burial ground, but the name of Philip Kearney cannot be found listed in any Protestant records. Since this is so and since his descendants are Catholics, it is reasonable to suppose that Philip Kearney himself professed that faith.²¹

It was Talbot's report with its attendant circumstances that resulted in charges being brought against Penn by the Anglican authorities in London. Penn was then present in London, attempting to adjust the debts he had contracted. Because of the accusation the Proprietor wrote on September 29, 1709, to James Logan, his confidential friend and agent in Philadelphia: ". . . Here is a complaint against your government, that you suffer Mass in a scandalous manner. Pray send the matter of fact, for

¹⁸ Eugene Devereux, *Chronicles of the Plumsted Family* (1887), 40; Joseph Kirlin, *Catholicity in Philadelphia* (1909), 23.

¹⁹ Devereux, *op. cit.*, 40.

²⁰ Kirlin, *op. cit.*, 23. The Jesuits had established themselves at Bohemia, Maryland, in 1706.—Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, I, 368-369.

²¹ Devereux, *op. cit.*, 41; Sir Lionel had two daughters; *viz.*, Rebecca, who married Philip Kearney, and Elizabeth, who married Michael Kearney. Members of the Devereux family are the only descendants of the first convert to Catholicism.—Griffin, "Lionell Brittin," *op. cit.*, 65.

ill use is made of it against us. . . ."²² Watson, a Protestant annalist of Philadelphia, quoted these words, and later in his account said that Penn wrote to his correspondent in Philadelphia: "It has become a reproach to me here with the Officers of the Crown, that you have suffered the scandal of Mass to be publicly celebrated."²³

The latter extract, having found its way into Catholic histories, was used by them as a reproach against Penn.²⁴ Griffin exonerated him from the stain on his character by proving that the "scandal of the Mass" was an alleged epithet not found in the Penn and Logan correspondence and that Catholics were not justified in attacking Penn and the Quakers as unfriendly to them.²⁵ His statement seems substantiated by the fact that priests from Maryland continued to minister to their flock in Pennsylvania.

After the appointment of Joseph Greaton, S.J., as resident pastor in Philadelphia, St. Joseph's Church was built in Willing's Alley (1732). Some years later the visiting Swedish naturalist, Peter Kalm, wrote in September, 1748, "the Roman Catholics have . . . a great house, which is well adorned within and has an organ."²⁶

Missions had also been established about 1741 for the Catholic German settlers at Conewago, Lancaster, and Goshenhoppen. In the last named place a school was connected with the church from the very beginning by Father Schneider, formerly *Rector Magnus* of the University of Heidelberg. As it was the only school in the neighborhood, Protestant as well as Catholic children attended.²⁷ Its foundation was another steppingstone towards the

²² Edward Armstrong, ed., *Correspondence between William Penn and James Logan, Secretary of the Province of Pennsylvania* (1872), II, 294.

²³ John F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania* (1856), I, 453.

²⁴ The statement of Watson was used by Henri de Courcey, a French journalist traveling in America, in his *Sketches of Catholicity in the United States*. Through Shea's translation of this French work the story became current in Catholic history. Cf. Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, I, 366-368.

²⁵ Martin I. J. Griffin, "William Penn, the Friend of Catholics," *Records*, I (1884), 73-74.

²⁶ Kalm, *op. cit.*, I, 33.

²⁷ James A. Burns, *The Catholic School System in the United States* (1908), 127.

creation of the parochial school system. In 1763 St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia was built. In accordance with the terms of Penn's charter Catholics could enjoy public worship in Pennsylvania, and that privilege was allowed in no other English colony.

The Revolution made necessary the enunciation of toleration in order to secure the assistance of all the colonials in the war against England. Accordingly, Congress in 1774 urged the necessity of forgetting religious animosity, and at the same time it issued a protest against the Quebec Act.²⁸ Since 1689, however, there had been a trend towards religious toleration in respect to Protestant dissenters and a weakening of the state-church idea.

Several factors contributed toward that end. From the beginning there arose in Protestantism sectarian differences and divisions which led to the establishment of new and schismatic organizations. Nowhere were more divergent sects to originate than in the United States.²⁹ In Europe the teachings of Socinus (1539-1604) and Arminius (1560-1609) began to undermine the Calvinistic doctrines of total depravity and special predilection—cardinal principles of Calvinism. These doctrines spread to New England and increased the growing indifference towards a religion which was too cold, formal, and conventional to make an appeal. Moreover, material advancement and the acquisition of wealth became major interests of later generations who rebelled against the theocratic autocracy of Congregationalism—the established church of the towns of New England.³⁰

In the Middle Colonies conditions were somewhat dissimilar because a greater variety of races and churches made more demand for religious toleration. In the Southern Colonies the Anglican Church was established. Its sphere of influence also extended to the Middle Colonies, where it occupied a favored legal position; but it was not until 1679 with the foundation of King's Chapel in

²⁸ Metzger, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Lenhart, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Channing, *op. cit.* (1937), III, 141-142; "Anti-Catholic Spirit of the Revolution," *Researches*, VI (1889), 150-178.

²⁹ Patrick J. Healy, "Contemporary American Protestantism," *Studies*, XXI (1932), 11.

³⁰ Evarts B. Greene, "Persistent Problems of Church and State," *American Historical Review*, XXXVI (1931), 260.

Boston that Episcopalianism obtained a foothold in Massachusetts,³¹ much to the chagrin of the Congregationalists. When the Anglican Church wished to create an American episcopate, the dissenting denominations united in opposition,³² and there followed one of the most bitter and furious debates in colonial history; this debate was undoubtedly important in deciding the popular attitude on the question of political independence.³³

With the advent of the Hanoverian dynasty a deep spiritual lethargy settled over England. To offset this growing coldness and indifference Charles Wesley, who had imbibed Continental pietism, inaugurated in England the evangelical movement within the Anglican Church.³⁴ Before 1700 there were only eight separate denominations of Protestants in the English colonies; *viz.*, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Quakers, Baptists, Dutch Reformed, Lutherans, Mennonites, and Presbyterians.³⁵ The evangelical revival, known as the Great Awakening, 1740-1750, caused much excitement throughout the land among dissenting churches and gave birth to a variety of sects.³⁶

The pietistic movement, which inaugurated the Methodist age, was brought to America by George Whitefield, who had joined Charles Wesley and his brother John at Oxford in the religious revival. Jonathan Edwards of Connecticut, the grandson of the famed Northampton minister, Solomon Stoddard, had already started, 1734, a revival in his state, but a visit of Whitefield to New England caused a renewal of evangelistic activity which reached a climax during 1740 and 1741. Open conversion was made the sole ground of communion. An opposing faction, led by Charles Chauncy of Massachusetts, combatted the emotional out-

³¹ Hawks and Perry, ed., *op. cit.*, 1, 3.

³² Marcus Jernegan, *The American Colonies, 1492-1750* (1939), 404; Vernon Parrington, *The Colonial Mind, 1620-1800* (1937), I, 149.

³³ Cobb, *op. cit.*, 454.

³⁴ Charles H. Maxson, *The Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies* (1820), 3-5.

³⁵ Healy, *op. cit.*, 12.

³⁶ Wesley M. Gewehr, "The Great Awakening Comes to America," *The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790* (1939), 9.

bursts and the bodily manifestations that were being stressed.³⁷ State and Church were rent asunder as the "Old Lights" and the "New Lights" gave rise in New England to two new schools of thought which only two generations later led to the formal cleavage of the Congregational body into unequal wings, the Orthodox or Trinitarians and the Unitarians or Anti-Trinitarians.³⁸

The Great Awakening, on the other hand, furnished recruits for such rising popular churches as the Baptist and the Methodist. The Presbyterians of the Middle Colonies and the South divided into the New Side party and the Old Side party, but the schism caused by the Great Revival was soon healed, and an agreement was reached in 1758.³⁹ Congregationalism, therefore, suffered most in New England, where its disintegration contributed substantially to the growth of other churches.

The Great Awakening, being essentially a dissenting movement, promoted the growth of liberalism and rationalism.⁴⁰ Toleration became a necessity, and the American mind was more and more open to religious inquiry. This tolerance was especially true during the Revolution when the exigencies of the time called for the postponement of religious disputes. Catholics began to be welcomed among the patriots as negotiations were entered into for securing financial aid and assistance from Catholic France. The influence of Catholics increased as the Revolutionary struggle deepened, especially after the recognition of the United States by France and Spain.⁴¹ The first diplomatic representatives to the

³⁷ Cf. Oliver P. Chitwood, *History of Colonial America* (1931), 516-549; James Truslow Adams, *Provincial Society* (1938), 270-286; William W. Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America* (1930), 184-224. Though the Great Awakening failed to improve to the degree expected the religious and moral conditions of the people, it did give impetus to various social and political ideas and movements.—Gewehr, *op. cit.*, 187-262; Maxson, *op. cit.*, 91-96, 146-151.

³⁸ Williston Walker, *A History of the Congregational Churches in the United States* (1894), 261-267; Parrington, *op. cit.*, I, 149-161; Joseph Tracy, *The Great Awakening*, 325-372. Cf. Ralph H. Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought* (1940), 32-33.

³⁹ Maxson, *op. cit.*, 115; Tracy, *op. cit.*, 397; Sweet, *op. cit.*, 207-209.

⁴⁰ Thomas C. Hall, *op. cit.*, 146-160.

⁴¹ Some feared the alliance with France. Students debated at Yale in one of their clubs "Whether the Alliance with France will be Beneficial to

American government were openly Catholic, and great events were celebrated with solemn services. Thus Conrad Alexandre Gérard, the Minister Plenipotentiary from France, who arrived in Philadelphia in August, 1778, took occasion the following year, July 2, 1779, to issue this invitation:

You are invited by the Minister Plenipotentiary of France to attend the *Te Deum* which will be chanted on Sunday the fourth of the month at noon, in the new Catholic chapel to celebrate the anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America.⁴²

The services were conducted by Seraphim Bandol, chaplain to Gérard, in St. Mary's Church, Philadelphia. On this occasion Abbé Bandol delivered an address which was later printed by order of Congress.⁴³

The presence in America of so many French soldiers with their Catholic chaplains brought Roman Catholicism for the first time into many localities and introduced to the people its solemn services and worship⁴⁴ and did much to dispel bigotry in every quarter.

the Inhabitants of America."—Koch, *op. cit.*, 20. Cf. John J. Meng, "Philadelphia Welcomes America's First Foreign Representative," *Records*, XLV (1934), 59-68.

⁴² Edward Humphrey, *Nationalism and Religion in America* (1924), 127; Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II (1888), 175; "The First Catholic Celebration of the Fourth of July," *Researches*, XVII (1900), 60, XXIV (1907), 315-318.

⁴³ The text of the sermon may be found in the *Massachusetts Spy* (*Worcester Gazette*), December 14, 1781, pages 1 and 2; William H. Bennett, *Catholic Footsteps in Old New York* (1909), 354.

⁴⁴ Sweet, *op. cit.*, 269. The French fleet, leaving France in April, 1778, under the command of Count d'Estaing, consisted of twelve ships and fourteen frigates flying the white ensign of the Bourbon King of France. Every ship had on board one or more Catholic chaplains. Accompanying the expedition was Gérard, the Minister Plenipotentiary. Cf. "Chaplains of the French Army in the American Revolution," *Researches*, XXVIII (1911), 67-74. When Count d'Estaing's fleet reached Boston, August 28, 1778, the curious populace were amazed to see plump and portly officers and strong sailors. They came to the conclusion that the wily French had picked out the best specimens they could find and put them into the first boats to make a

When the French troops landed in Boston, the selectmen of the city took part in a procession in which a crucifix was borne aloft. On the death of a French officer who was buried with all the impressive ceremonies of the Catholic Church the members of the town council marched behind the large crucifix carried in the funeral cortège. A paper of New York taunted them with their sudden conversion, and newspapers and pamphlets were filled with ridicule, abuse, and warning against the French "papists." British and Tories tried to use the alliance with France to rekindle hatred of Catholics in order to injure the patriot cause.⁴⁵ It is true that necessity compelled the various Protestant sects to respect the religious convictions of their Catholic compatriots; nevertheless, the prejudices of former days were some-

handsome impression, but when boatload after boatload landed, the Yankee awoke to the fact that the Frenchmen looked like other people. William Channing wrote to Ezra Stiles, "Neither the officers nor the men are the effeminate beings we were heretofore taught to believe them. They are as large and likely men as can be produced by any nation."—Dixon Ryan Fox, "Culture in Knapsacks," *Ideas in Motion* (1935), 51-55; Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America* (1940), 31. D'Estaing, however, proved a great disappointment.—Richard J. Purcell, *The American Nation* (1933), 218-219; Paul Allen, *A History of the American Revolution* (1819), II, 204-205; 264-272.

⁴⁵ Cf. John Gilmary Shea, "The Catholic Church in American History," *A. C. Q. R.*, I (1876), 155. Though Washington had condemned the celebration of Guy Fawkes' Day, on November 5 (Sparks, ed., *op. cit.*, III, 144), there was not a final stop to the practice until the arrival of Count d'Estaing in 1778. While the French fleet remained in the harbor of Boston from August 25, 1778, until November 3 of the same year, a constant intercourse was kept up between the officers on board and the inhabitants of the town. Frequent visits were paid on both sides. The French were pleased with their reception on shore and with the marked attention paid them by the respectable inhabitants of Boston; they, on the other hand, began to entertain a more favorable opinion of the Roman Catholic allies. As Mass was regularly celebrated on board the fleet, it happened that some of the most respectable citizens were sometimes present at the Divine Office, and they returned home favorably impressed with the Catholic worship as well as edified by the general piety of those on board who had assisted at it. Thus a kind of intercourse was kept up which operated in some degree in favor of religion.—Benedict Joseph Fenwick, "Memoirs to Serve for the Future History of the Diocese of Boston," 11-12.

what allayed and a remarkable change of feeling was brought about towards France, the traditional enemy of the colonies.⁴⁶

When Luzerne became minister, 1799, he steadily pursued the policy set by the popular Gérard,⁴⁷ and in his turn made many friendships with the most prominent men of the country. The Spanish representative, Don Juan de Miralles, died while on a visit to General Washington at Morristown. Luzerne sent out invitations for the *Requiem* which was celebrated on May 8, 1780. Ebenezer Hazard, Surveyor-General of the Post Office of the United States, writing to Dr. Jeremy Belknap, thus described the event:

At Philadelphia I met the most striking instance of Catholicism I ever saw. . . . As I had never seen even the inside of a Popish church, and the ceremony was to be performed on Monday, I determined to attend; and upon going into the Church, I found there not only Papists, but Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Quakers, etc. The two chaplains to Congress (one a Presbyterian and the other a Churchman) were amongst the rest. I confess I was pleased to find the minds of the people so unfettered with the shackles of bigotry. . . .⁴⁸

At the close of the Revolution Luzerne again invited the United States Congress as well as the principal generals and the distinguished citizens to attend a solemn *Te Deum* to be chanted in

⁴⁶ With the establishment of the French alliance, the French language increased in popularity. Governor Jefferson of Virginia established the first professorial chair of French at the College of William and Mary. Other colleges followed this example.—Koch, *op. cit.*, 19.

⁴⁷ Before Gérard's departure Yale conferred on him the degree of LL.D.—Ezra Stiles, *Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles*, edited by F. B. Dexter (1901), II, 367-368; *Americana* (1938), XII, 493.

⁴⁸ "Belknap Papers," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 5th series, II (1877), 61-62. The occasion was quite a social affair, and Benedict Arnold, a social light in the city, was present. After his treason Arnold issued a proclamation to the officers and soldiers of the Continental army in which he invited them to join a British cavalry and infantry corps. He asked whether they knew "the eye which guides this pen lately saw your mean and profligate Congress at mass for the soul of a departed Roman Catholic in Purgatory."—Claude H. Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (1902), 188.

St. Mary's Church, Philadelphia, November 4, 1781.⁴⁹ When Congress moved to New York, 1784, the French and Spanish embassies followed. When the cornerstone of the first Catholic church was laid in that city, October 5, 1785, by Diego de Gardoqui, the Spanish minister to the United States, a large crowd of spectators was present.⁵⁰

The most prominent convert patriot of the Revolution was Thomas Sim Lee, who rendered valuable service to the American cause. He held several offices, being Governor of Maryland from 1779 to 1784, a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1783-1784, and a member of the Maryland Constitutional Convention in 1786. On October 17, 1771, he had married Mary Digges, the only child of Ignatius Digges of Melwood Park, Maryland, whose family was distinguished among the old Catholic families of England and Maryland as the Lees were among the Protestant families of England and Virginia. Mary Digges Lee was both an ardent member of the Catholic Church and a devoted patriot. As the Governor's wife, she headed the ladies of Maryland in their efforts to relieve the sufferings of General Washington's soldiers and was thanked by the General for her services. It was not until about 1800 that Thomas Sim Lee, her husband, entered the Catholic Church. On one occasion, so the tradition runs, he had made a promise when his wife was dangerously ill that he would join her Church if she recovered. This promise he faithfully kept.⁵¹ John Gilmary Shea

⁴⁹ Humphrey, *op. cit.*, 129, 230. "The *Te Deum* at St. Mary's in Philadelphia for the victory at Yorktown," *Researches*, XXIV (1907), 311-315. On four different occasions the Continental Congress attended services at St. Mary's Church, Philadelphia; *viz.*, 1. The funeral of General Du Coudray of the French army, who was drowned while crossing the Schuylkill River on September 24, 1777; 2. The celebration of the anniversary of the Fourth of July, 1779; 3. The *Requiem* Mass for Miralles; 4. The Mass of Thanksgiving for the victory of Yorktown on Sunday, November 4, 1781.—"Historical Notes," *Records*, XXXV (1924), 85-86.

⁵⁰ Bennett, *op. cit.*, 370.

⁵¹ Richard H. Clarke, "Our Converts," *A. C. Q. R.*, XVIII (1893), 555. Mrs. Lee died in 1805. A descendant of Thomas Sim Lee holds that he had joined the Catholic Church sometime before his wife's death.—M. C. Lee, "A Revolutionary Governor and His Family," *Catholic World*, L (1890), 784. There is, however, no definite information relating to Lee's conversion in his private papers in the possession of his family.

says that Lee, amid his engrossing public cares, had studied deeply the claims of the Catholic Church. This fact no doubt helps to explain the promise made regarding his wife's recovery. Shea also considers it creditable that the step excited no odium or bigotry in his native state.⁵² Governor Lee's four sons and two daughters were brought up in the Catholic religion; thus began the Catholic branch of the Lees in Maryland.

In passing, it is interesting to note that Captain John Barry, the naval hero, was twice married to Protestants. The identity of his first wife is uncertain, but she was either Mary Burns or Mary Clary. Because she was buried in the graveyard at St. Mary's, Philadelphia, it is commonly supposed Mrs. Barry was converted to the Catholic faith.⁵³ On July 7, 1777, Captain Barry was married in Christ's Episcopal Church to Sarah Austin.⁵⁴ According to the register preserved at St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia she was baptized a Catholic on July 21, 1779.⁵⁵ There were no children

⁵² John Gilmary Shea, "Converts, Their Influence and Work in This Country," *A. C. Q. R.*, VIII (1883), 509-529.

⁵³ The inscription on her tombstone reads. "In Memory of Mary, wife of Capt. John Barry, who departed this life Feb. 9th, 1771. Age 29 years and 10 months." Miss Sarah Smith Stafford, in 1877, wrote to Captain John Barnes that Barry's first wife was Mary Burns, daughter of a Presbyterian minister. There is no mention, however, among the marriage licenses of such a union. It seems more probable that Barry's first wife was Mary Clary, for a marriage license is recorded in the Pennsylvania Archives for John Barry and Mary Clary as of October 31, 1767.—Martin I. J. Griffin, *Commodore John Barry* (1879), 3-6. If this is our John Barry, then he took out a license two days after his return trip from the Barbadoes, for which he again set sail on November 12, 1767.—"History of Commodore Barry," *Records*, VII (1896), 160. William B. Clark, *Gallant John Barry, 1745-1803* (1938), 34-35, gives February 9, 1774, as the date of the death of Mary Clary.

⁵⁴ Griffin, *Barry*, 6. Because of his marriage in the Episcopal Church some have questioned Barry's sincerity as a Catholic. No doubt there were extenuating circumstances, for Barry is known to have lived firm in the faith of the Roman Catholic Church. Cf. Martin J. Griffin, "Was Commodore Barry Any Kind of a Catholic?" *Researches*, XX (1903), 102.

⁵⁵ "History of Commodore Barry," *op. cit.*, 160; Clarke, *op. cit.*, 184-185.

by either marriage.⁵⁶ When the Commodore died, on September 13, 1803, he was buried near his first wife. Sarah Austin Barry survived her husband for nearly thirty years. One who knew her paid her this tribute:

She was mother of the motherless, the friend of the friendless; her heart overflowed with kind feelings to all her fellow creatures. Her urbanity and hospitality rendered her house the pleasant resort of both young and old. Mrs. Barry's fireside was proverbial among her acquaintance. Her piety was ardent, sincere, and unostentatious. She rose with the dawn of the day and passed a considerable time of that period in reading and religious exercise. . . .⁵⁷

On the occasion of her death, November 13, 1831, the *National Gazette* carried this testimonial:

. . . This lady was distinguished throughout her life by her native excellence and active virtue. . . . She married during the height of the contest for American liberty, when her gallant and intrepid husband became engaged in the most hazardous enterprises. At that period, her prudence, fortitude, and active benevolence were extensively exercised, being called into requisition by a multitude of conflicting circumstances. She then acquired, and ever since has commanded the respect, esteem, and tender affection of all those who had the happiness of an intimate acquaintance with her.⁵⁸

Joseph Gurn has characterized her as "a remarkable woman, a fit consort for John Barry."⁵⁹

⁵⁶ In the fall of 1785 Barry acquired an estate, named Strawberry Hill. The Barrys welcomed into their household Patrick Hayes, a young nephew of sixteen, from Ireland. Romance soon developed with Elizabeth Keen, a cousin of Mrs. Barry. Many friends and relatives enjoyed the hospitality of their genial host and hostess at Strawberry Hill.—Clark, *op. cit.*, 327, 354, 376.

⁵⁷ Joseph Gurn, *Commodore John Barry, Father of the American Navy* (1933), 293.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 292-293.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 292.

Thomas Lloyd, often called the father of American stenography, was the reporter for the Pennsylvania and Federal Congresses and founder of the *Congressional Record*. He also married a Protestant who later embraced Catholicism. Born in London, August 14, 1756, Lloyd spent seven years at the Jesuit college of St. Omer where he learned a system of shorthand. While a student there, he became a friend of Leonard Neale, later Archbishop of Baltimore, who advised him to go to America. Having settled in St. Mary's County, Maryland, he joined the Revolutionary forces, and at the battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777, he was wounded and taken prisoner. On being exchanged, he was assigned to the quartermaster general's department with the rank of captain.⁶⁰ While purchasing supplies to be sent later to General Greene's army in the South, Lloyd met Mary Carson. She was born in Philadelphia, October 12, 1762, but her family had moved to Lancaster where her father had built the first Presbyterian church. Shortly after their meeting Lloyd was sent to England via France on a secret mission. While he was absent, Miss Carson is said to have prayed that, if it was God's will that she should marry Lloyd, he would return. He came back, and on October 2, 1780, they were married⁶¹ by the Reverend Peter Muhlenberg, a famous patriot Lutheran minister of the Revolution.⁶²

In 1789 Lloyd reprinted from the London edition Bishop Chaloner's *The Unerring Authority of the Catholic Church in Matters of Faith*.⁶³ It is related that his wife was converted by reading the book. Like other women of her day, unheard of and unsung, she went about fulfilling her Christian duties in her home. All

⁶⁰ Bennett, *op. cit.*, 394-395.

⁶¹ Martin I. J. Griffin, "Thomas Lloyd," *Researches*, VII (1890), 19; *Records*, III (1888), 223.

⁶² J. T. Headley, *Chaplains and Clergy of the Revolution* (1864), 121-128; George H. Gemzer, "Peter Muhlenberg," *D. A. B.*, VIII (1934), 311-312. Lloyd would have known Muhlenberg from the battle of Brandywine as Muhlenberg rendered distinguished service there.

⁶³ Wilfred Parsons, S.J., *Early Catholic Americana* (1939), 20. Lloyd was the second Catholic publisher in this country. C. Talbot of Dublin had published in Philadelphia, in 1784, *The History of the Old and New Testaments*. "Thomas Lloyd," *Researches*, XVI (1899), 184.

her children were brought up as Catholics and died in that communion.⁶⁴

The old order was changing. The end of the Revolution saw a turnover of society in its political and social ideals. At the end of the colonial wars England's domination and Protestantism had been secure in North America. The separation of Church and State, the divisions among the various religious denominations, the transient growth of deism, the influx of immigration—all these factors made for a New World order. In addition there was the industrial and economic unrest of post-war years.

In the midst of this post-Revolutionary milieu Catholicism began to rise. The leaders of the various denominations were anxious to adjust themselves to meet changed conditions. While the nation and the states were engaged in the business of drafting their respective constitutions, ecclesiastical bodies also sought the establishment of their church polity.⁶⁵ Such activity engaged the attention of the Catholic priests on the missions in Maryland and Pennsylvania. On June 27, 1783, they assembled at Whitemarsh, Maryland, to consider what measures they should adopt. They were now no longer subject to the jurisdiction of the Vicar-Apostolic of London; Bishop Talbot did not desire to have them under his care, nor did it seem wise to the priests in this country to continue spiritual direction under English episcopal authority. Already the situation created by the Treaty of Paris, 1783, had engaged the attention of the Holy See, and Cardinal Antonelli, Prefect of Propaganda, sent instructions to Cardinal Doria Pamphili, Papal Nuncio at Paris, to initiate negotiations towards the organization of the Catholic Church in the United States.⁶⁶ In the meantime the missionary clergy of the United States forwarded their petition to the Congregation de Propaganda Fide, requesting that Father John Lewis be formally named their

⁶⁴ Bennet, *op. cit.*, 396.

⁶⁵ Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 207-212. Cf. Sweet, *op. cit.*, 280.

⁶⁶ Carl R. Fish, "Documents Relative to the Adjustment of the Roman Catholic Organization to the Conditions of National Independence," *American Historical Review*, XV (1910), 800. Cf. Peter Guilday, "The Prefecture-Apostolic of the United States," *History of the Council of Baltimore* (1932), 53-60.

supervisor and authorized to confirm, to consecrate chalices, and to impart faculties to the priests on the missions.⁶⁷ Matters were thereby hastened, but Father Lewis was an old man and practically unknown outside the circle of his brother priests; therefore, John Carroll was chosen and appointed Prefect Apostolic in June, 1784.⁶⁸ This arrangement, however, proved unsatisfactory, because of the limited powers of the Prefect Apostolic. Accordingly the Propaganda saw the necessity for appointing a bishop with full authority. Through a special indult the clergy were allowed to elect their own bishop. The result was the choice of Carroll, who received twenty-four votes out of twenty-six ballots cast.⁶⁹ With its own bishop and organization, subject always to the Holy See in its spiritual union, the Catholic Church in this country began its phenomenal growth and expansion.

With the exception of the Congregational and Baptist Churches, which were indigenous and local in their organizations, the Protestant sects had old-world connections. This was especially true of the Anglican and Methodist Churches in America. Both suffered greatly during the Revolution because of their English sympathies. At the end of the war the Anglican Church adopted the name of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, yet it was a church without a bishop, for the opposition of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians had been strong enough to thwart the endeavors of the Anglican leaders to establish a hierarchy. Now they must determine upon some means by which to perpetuate their church. A convention was called to meet in New York in October, 1784, as a prelude to forming a national organization. At this time Dr. William White of Christ Church, Philadelphia, an outstanding Anglican leader, proposed as a temporary expedient the advisability of non-episcopal ordination. The Episcopalian clergymen of Con-

⁶⁷ At this time a bishop was not desired because of fear of antagonizing those Protestants who were opposed to hierarchical appointments.

⁶⁸ It is not known to whom the credit should be given for suggesting Carroll, but it is probable that Benjamin Franklin, envoy to Paris, and Father Thorpe, a friend of Carroll at that time stationed in Rome, were responsible for the choice. Cf. Jules A. Baisnée, *France and the Establishment of the American Hierarchy* (1934), 81, 86, 120.

⁶⁹ Guilday, *John Carroll*, 163-178.

necticut, firm believers in apostolic succession, became alarmed, held an election, and sent Samuel Seabury abroad to receive episcopal consecration. Refused by the authorities of London, he proceeded to Scotland, where a Jacobite bishop acceded to his request on November 14, 1784.⁷⁰ Matters were thereby complicated for the brethren in the Middle Atlantic and Southern colonies, and when the second general convention of leaders met in Philadelphia, September 27, 1785, there was no representative from the New England states.

During the war the congregation of King's Chapel, the first Anglican establishment in Massachusetts had become demoralized. On its reorganization the liberal element, which had embraced the tenets of Socinianism or anti-Trinitarianism, brought into existence the first specifically Unitarian Church in New England. The liturgy was revised during 1785, and in 1787 James Freeman was ordained minister by the church wardens.⁷¹ It was while these events were taking place among the members of King's Chapel that Dr. White wrote to Charles Miller, probably senior warden at the time, emphasizing the need of unity to offset the progress of the Catholic Church, which evidently was making converts. His letter of December 1, 1785, reads:

Let me, sir, entreat you to recollect how much more serviceable it will be to the common cause of Christianity, if we can accomplish a great and liberal plan for connecting in one system the members of our widely extended communion; rather than for every congregation to be in all respects self-governed; or, if this cannot be, that we may at least continue one in each state. I am amazed that the importance of this is not more seen, in relation to guarding against the progress of a church as yet

⁷⁰ E. Edwards Beardsley, *Life and Correspondence of the Right Reverend Samuel Seabury* (1881), 78, 79. The orders of the Jacobite bishops were considered valid by the Anglicans as the chain had not been broken when the Anglican Church in Scotland had been disestablished because of the refusal of the Scotch bishops to disown James II. They also had taken part in the uprisings of 1715 and 1745.—William S. Perry, *Bishop Seabury and Bishop Provoost* (1862), II, *passim*; Sweet, *op. cit.*, 286.

⁷¹ Henry W. Foote, *Annals of King's Chapel* (1896), II, 386-389; William B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit* (1865), VIII, 166-168.

scarcely known in your country. . . . Of all the members of the Protestant body, the Church of England has been the strongest bulwark against her, from the circumstance of retaining more than others, ancient institutions which were prior to her corruption. I cannot bear the thought of our communion's losing in the new world what has been our glory in the old.⁷²

While these events were happening, Bishop Seabury had returned home and was working most zealously for the spread of Episcopalianism in New England. Seabury's episcopacy was generally recognized by members of the Anglican Church in the other states; nevertheless, the churchmen in the Middle and Southern sections wished to obtain the bishopric directly from England. With this end in view they framed an address to the English archbishops and bishops. Their petition was delivered by John Adams, minister to the Court of King James.⁷³ The matter was taken up with the British Parliament which authorized the archbishops of Canterbury and York to consecrate "foreign bishops." At once William White of Pennsylvania and Samuel Provoost of New York, who had been elected by their respective state assemblies, sailed for England in November, 1786. On February 4, 1787, they received episcopal consecration in Lambeth Chapel. On their return Bishop Seabury wrote to the two new bishops and expressed his concern for the unity of the church. When the next national convention was held in 1789, Bishop Seabury was present. A new constitution was adopted whereby the English and Scottish branches were united into one American Church with Bishop Seabury as presiding prelate.⁷⁴

The Methodists were the first religious body to form a national organization. They had remained a part of the Anglican body, but after the Revolution John Wesley thought it better to sever

⁷² Bird Wilson, *Memoir of the Life of the Right Reverend William White* (1839), 104. Relative data in Samuel Wilberforce, *A History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America* (1844), 186; Humphrey, *op. cit.*, 197.

⁷³ Sprague, "Historical Introduction," *op. cit.*, xiii.

⁷⁴ Wilson, *op. cit.*, 118. For "Deed of Consecration of Bishop Seabury," see William S. Perry, *Journal of the General Conventions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* (1874), I, 143-144.

connections with the English Church. He decided that under the circumstances he, as presbyter, had the right to ordain ministers for America. Acting accordingly, he sent them to this country with authority to ordain others. A conference of the preachers was summoned to meet in Baltimore, December 24, 1784. Within ten days the Methodist Episcopal Church of America was organized. Francis Asbury, who had remained in the country all during the Revolution, was ordained and made one of the two superintendents to look after the welfare of the Church. Soon he became the leading exponent of Methodism.⁷⁵ As Methodism subordinated everything else to emotional appeal and adapted itself to the various levels of culture, it began to grow rapidly, especially on the frontier.

All the other important religious bodies of the day, Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and German Lutheran went through some process of reorganization.⁷⁶ The Baptists, though believing in the theory of complete independence of each congregation, felt it necessary to form associations during the years from 1774 to 1789. The Congregationalists alone failed to unite during this time of national expansion. As early as 1708, Connecticut Congregationalists, conscious of the need of some sort of unity among themselves, had adopted the Saybrook Platform. Its chief feature was the accentuation of "consociation," or rule by council.⁷⁷ Congregationalism in Connecticut, therefore, tended more towards Presbyterianism with its synod and presbyteries. In 1801 the two denominations adopted a plan of union by which they agreed to form joint congregations in the frontier communities.⁷⁸ Jonathan Edwards the Younger and Nathaniel Emmons, who were emphasizing the pure democracy of Congregationalism, fought against this unity. In 1802 Emmons in his opposition to the state association exclaimed: "Association leads to Consociation; Consocia-

⁷⁵ Frederick W. Briggs, *Bishop Asbury* (1879), 151-170. As Asbury assumed the title of bishop in his correspondence, the term came to designate one holding the office of superintendent within the denomination, rather than an order.—Robert Baird, *Religion in America* (1856), 488-498.

⁷⁶ Cf. Albert B. Hart, *National Ideals Historically Traced, 1607-1907* (1907), 208.

⁷⁷ Sweet, *op. cit.*, 296, 297.

⁷⁸ Mary L. Greene, *op. cit.*, 357-367.

tion leads to Presbyterianism; Presbyterianism to Episcopacy; Episcopacy leads to Roman Catholicism and Roman Catholicism is an ultimate fact."⁷⁹

Congregationalism paid dearly for its lack of unity. At the outbreak of the Revolution the Congregational Church had been the fundamental institution of Massachusetts. It was described as the Standing Order, and as such it looked upon all others as dissenters.⁸⁰ Now heresy and schism were to bring about its disestablishment. The old controversies over Trinity, universal salvation, and free will were renewed. Some turned towards Universalism as preached by John Murray,⁸¹ but by far the greater number among the liberal faction became Unitarians. From 1800 to 1825 the intellectual life, not only of New England, but of the whole northern part of the United States was completely under the Unitarian movement.⁸²

The most potent solvent of Calvinism was Deism, which had come from England during the Seven Years' War. Later it was augmented by the teaching of the French encyclopedists. Authorities are agreed that Deism in America was more an attempt to break down the rigid theological system of Calvinism than a revolt against religion in general. Consequently, it never became a destructive force it did in France.⁸³ At first it was rather an aristocratic movement, in which the intellectuals of the country were influenced more by Lockean ideas than by the teachings of the French philosophers.⁸⁴ They had no desire that Deism should reach the people, and when it did, a revival movement, reaching from Maine to Georgia and west to the most remote frontier, put an end to the cause of militant Deism.⁸⁵

Such was the picture of religion, such the state of society at the beginning of the early national period. In the midst of many

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 367; Sweet, *op. cit.*, 295-296.

⁸⁰ Cf. Thorning, *op. cit.*, 14, 226.

⁸¹ Jacob C. Meyer, *Church and State in Massachusetts* (1930), 121; Justin Winsor, ed., *Memorial History of Boston* (1881), III, 403.

⁸² Thomas C. Hall, *op. cit.*, 213, 305.

⁸³ Woodbridge Riley, *American Thought from Puritanism to Pragmatism* (1915), 6, and *American Philosophy* (1907), 16.

⁸⁴ Herbert M. Morais, *Deism in Eighteenth Century America* (1934), 145.

⁸⁵ Koch, *op. cit.*, 274; Jones, *op. cit.*, 388, 416.

conflicting ideologies and divergent views, the Catholic Church attracted followers as men began to examine her creed or dogmatic basis. She gained converts especially from among the Episcopalians and the Congregationalists. Out of the struggle that continued between the two sects, there was formed a school with decided leanings towards Catholicism. Some of the Congregationalists, fighting against formal disintegration, examined the Catholic doctrines directly; others entered the Catholic Church after having first become Episcopalians.⁸⁶

The Catholic Church at that time possessed no social prestige. The Carrolls and a few other old Maryland families, along with the Catholic emigrés from France and the West Indies, had helped to give it some social tone. This was soon offset, however, when the insurrection and revolution in Ireland brought to this country energetic, but poverty-stricken immigrants.⁸⁷ Roman Catholicism thus became identified with the poor and unlearned. One, therefore, who embraced Catholicism was likely to find himself politically and socially ostracized.

Quite different is the story of the converts of the early national period from that of the New England captives. No compelling circumstances operated among them as was alleged in the case of the French Canadians. To follow one's convictions meant sacrificing worldly prospects, cherished hopes, and personal feelings. There was likewise the stigma of disgrace and shame to be endured. The convert who could surmount these difficulties showed independence and courage, for private judgment was pitted against the public judgment of his environment. In comparison with the

⁸⁶ Shea, "Converts," *op. cit.*, 515-516.

⁸⁷ Thomas C. Hall, *op. cit.*, 291. For French refugees see Jones, *op. cit.*, 132-135; for Irish, Samuel P. Orth, "The Irish Invasion," *Immigration and Labor* (1920), 103-111; Gerald Shaughnessy, "Catholic Growth from 1790-1820," *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith?* (1925), 63-73. Though no records of immigration were kept prior to 1820, the first naturalization act, which required a period of two years' residence, the time was in 1795 revised to extend the time to five, and in 1798, the year of Irish Rebellion, the Federalists pushed the residence period to fourteen years. From 1815 the Catholic Irish increase was steady. Cf. William Forbes Adams, *Ireland and Irish Immigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine* (1932), *passim*.

exterior difficulties to be overcome the interior seemed even greater. The stories of these conversions tell of many an interior struggle to make the lower will of sensation and impression conform to what they saw as the higher will of reason. Once unity of will was attained, however, peace of soul apparently followed.

It would be impossible in a work of this scope to make a complete and exhaustive study of each convert during the period. The process must therefore be one of selection and approach. Native Americans only will be treated, with just passing mention to such as, for instance, the Russian prince, Demetrius Gallitzin.⁸⁸ The writer must necessarily limit the number even of native Catholic converts to the most prominent among them. For obvious reasons a study of conversions from the lowly walks of life and their later influence on the growth of the Catholic Church in the country is impossible.

⁸⁸ Gallitzin sacrificed home and position to labor among the poor of Pennsylvania. Known as Augustine Smith to disguise his noble name, he spent his patrimony on his Catholic colony. His zeal in defense of Catholic principles brought many others to join him. His untiring labors in behalf of his flock caused him to be known as the "Apostle of the Alleghenies."—Joseph C. Plümpe, tr., *The Life and Works of Prince Demetrius Gallitzin* (1940), *passim*; Richard J. Purcell, "Gallitzin," *D. A. B.* (1931), VII, 113-115.

PART III

CONVERTS IN THE NATIONAL PERIOD PRIOR TO 1829

CHAPTER VI

JOHN THAYER

The first native son of the period to embrace the Catholic faith was John Thayer, a descendant of the well-known Puritan family of Richard Thayer, an early settler of Braintree, Massachusetts. John Thayer was born at Boston, May 15, 1758 and enjoyed social position and easy circumstances.¹ Like the rest of the New Englanders, Thayer was imbued with the Puritan enmity towards everything Catholic. It was presumably by watching the behavior of the French soldiers and sailors during their religious exercises that he first felt an awakening curiosity to know something about Catholic doctrine.²

Until the age of sixteen Thayer had been indifferent to study, but at his own request his parents entered him at Yale. Here he studied under the celebrated Puritan minister, the Reverend Dr. Chauncy.³ During the presidency of Ezra Stiles he received an honorary degree from Yale in 1779.⁴ Returning to Boston, he was called to minister to the Congregational Church. Percival Merritt in *Sketches of the Three Earliest Roman Catholic Priests in Boston*, thinks that it is probable that he was given a

¹ Elisha Thayer, *Family Memorial* (1835), 134; the date of John's birth is not given, but Percival Merritt in *Biographical Notes on an Account of the Conversion of the Reverend John Thayer* (1923), 129, gives it as May 15, 1758. Arthur T. Connolly, "Historical Sketch of Reverend John Thayer," *U. S. C. H. M.*, II (1888), 261, has the year 1760; Guilday, *John Carroll*, II, 420, says 1755.

² William Byrne and others, *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States* (1899), I, 15. Cf. Thomas E. Bridgett, *A New England Convert* (1897), 3.

³ Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 387.

⁴ Stiles, *op. cit.*, II, 369.

license to preach as a candidate and that he was never ordained.⁵ He did, however, serve as chaplain at Fort Castle William from August, 1780, to May, 1781.⁶

At the close of this period of service he embarked for Europe to "acquire a knowledge of the Constitution of the States, of the manners, customs, laws, and government of the principal nations."⁷ Shortly after his arrival in France at the end of 1781 he fell dangerously ill. His first concern was to issue an order that no Catholic priest should be allowed to come near him. After his recovery he remained in France for ten months and then passed over to England. While there he accepted an invitation to preach in an English Protestant church. It was remarked to him after his sermon that his doctrines did not agree with those of his hearers, and he replied that he had taken them from the gospel.

After a sojourn of three months in England he returned to France en route to Rome. In his passage from Marseilles to Rome the vessel was becalmed, and he was obliged to remain several days at the little harbor of Port Ercole. Here Marquis d'Elmoro, "a respectable old gentleman," as Thayer characterized him, received him with paternal affection and kindness, and "his house, his table, his library," all were put at his service. At his departure the Marquis made Thayer promise to keep up a correspondence with him.

Arriving at Rome, Thayer secured lodging with a worthy and virtuous family, where he found himself treated as a member of the household. "Such goodness, such cordiality to a stranger, to an avowed Protestant," he wrote, "at once touched and surprised me." He concluded that the Catholic religion was not so unsociable as to inspire sentiments of aversion and intolerance towards those of a different persuasion. The hospitality of the Italians moved him, as it did Mrs. Seton a few years later, and

⁵ Percival Merritt, *Sketches of the Three Earliest Roman Catholic Priests in Boston* (1923), 213.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ John Thayer, *Account of the Conversion of the Reverend John Thayer*, (Dublin edition, 1809), 6. The incidents that follow are based on Thayer's narrative.

slowly he was led to condemn the unjust prejudice in which he had been reared.

Thayer at once began to visit the most celebrated masterpieces and monuments of antiquity. He learned Italian so that he might be able to read the best authors in the language. While studying the constitutions and the actual state of Rome, he desired, purely for the purpose of deriving information, to instruct himself in the principles of the Catholic religion. He broached religious subjects to several ecclesiastics whom he met, but they, finding him a contentious and determined Protestant, soon dismissed him. Finally he met two Jesuits with whom he entered into conversation.⁸ Although he had no respect whatever for the Jesuits, in his desire for truth he was willing to form an acquaintance; he was resolved to be on his guard "against their subtlety." When he was introduced to Father Ambrogio, distinguished for his learning and piety, Thayer at once blurted out: "Sir, I may possibly have conceived some false notions of your religion, as all the knowledge I have of it is taken from the report of its enemies; if this be the case, I wish to be undeceived, for I would not entertain a prejudice against any person, not even the Devil. Yet do not think of converting me, for certainly you will not succeed." Thayer was somewhat surprised that after such a remark, Father Ambrogio received him with gentleness and affability. This reception he attributed to pure charity on the part of the priest. Moreover, Ambrogio consented to have some conferences with him on religion. He explained to him in order all the articles of the Catholic doctrine.

Though many difficulties arose in Thayer's mind, he could not help remarking that through the whole system of the Catholic religion there ran a wonderful harmony and a wisdom which seemed to have something of the divine. For three months, during the leisure hours at his disposal, Ambrogio discussed with Thayer the teachings of the Catholic Church. Still not satisfied, Thayer had recourse to another Jesuit, Father Zacharia, a man well-known for his work on the celibacy of the clergy. This priest refused to

⁸ Though the Jesuit Order had been suppressed at this time, the term continued to be applied to those who had formerly belonged to the Society.

help him, however, until he should say the Lord's Prayer three times. Thayer was amused, but upon reflection concluded that the prayers demanded were certainly not out of place; hence he complied. On the appointed day he returned to Father Zacharia. Being now more thoroughly acquainted with Catholic doctrine, Thayer had only to clear up certain points regarding which he still entertained doubts. He proposed his difficulties, and Father Zacharia gave him books and pointed out passages where these very doubts were discussed by the best theologians and polemical writers.

At the same time Thayer was conferring with an Augustinian friar. The latter pointed out the distinction which Catholics make between articles of faith and simple opinions. On conversing with others Thayer found that all were agreed in matters of faith, but free when it came to a question of non-essentials. This uniformity of Catholic teaching down through the ages made on him the liveliest impression. It had grieved him that among the leaders of Protestant denominations with whom he had conversed he had found much instability in questions of doctrine. He reasoned that truth must be one and began to see the fallacy of private interpretation which resulted in so many religious beliefs.

Thayer's researches by this time had carried him much further than he had designed. When he began the inquiry, he had not the least suspicion that he would eventually pass adverse judgment on the denomination in which he had been reared, but he soon became conscious of its evident deficiencies. He saw the reasonableness of the truth as contained in the doctrine of the Catholic Church, but determined that he would not yet abandon the long-standing convictions of his youth. He determined to study further and for this purpose to bring with him to America controversial books by outstanding Catholic authorities. Here he would read them at his leisure, and if after mature reflection he could not answer the arguments, he would make his submission to Rome.

Various events, however, were hastening his acceptance of Catholicism. A work of Father Segneri on the guardian angel deepened his belief in a tutelar spirit, and he resolved that henceforth his conduct would be worthy of this heavenly companion. Soon the death of Benedict Joseph Labre, in Rome, April 16, 1783,

was to bring to him the sudden and startling news that a saint had died and that miracles were being wrought through his intercession. The idea was scoffed at by the philosophical rationalists, for English deism and French materialism were the fashion among the intellectuals. Thayer was not free from the prejudice of the times. In the coffee houses which he frequented he even jested with others about supernatural interposition. He was shocked that a young Frenchman of good education should have left home to lead a life of poverty and penance.

As the extension and gravity of the evidence concerning the miracles daily increased, Thayer, busy-body as ever, determined to investigate. He visited four persons who were said to have been miraculously cured; he questioned and examined reliable witnesses who testified to the establishment of the facts in each case. At last the cure of a nun in the convent of St. Apollonia convinced him of the authenticity of the miracles. He reasoned that if all miracles, when competent witnesses attested their validity, were rejected, the miracles in the gospels would also no longer be tenable. Furthermore, if one would be consistent, then all human testimony should be denied. Convinced that there was something supernatural in these cures, he felt that God was showing him by their means that the Catholic Church is the depository of revealed truth. He realized that he must now either accept or renounce Catholic doctrine. He was convinced, but he had not the courage to yield. How could he abjure the tenets in which he had been reared and which he had preached to others? He must abandon his state and livelihood, and probably incur the indignation of his family to which he was tenderly attached.

While he was thus fluctuating and undetermined, he came across a little book entitled *Manifesto di un Cavaliere Cristiano convertito alla Religione Cattolica* which contained the account of a conversion. He feared to read it, for he seemed to have a presentiment that it would put an end to his hesitancy. A prayer directed to the Holy Ghost at its beginning caught his attention, however, and in anguish of mind he threw himself on his knees and with tears prayed for enlightenment. Before he had finished reading the book he felt an inward strength to surmount the obstacles which had hitherto retarded him, and he exclaimed, "My God, I promise to become a Catholic."

With his usual spontaneous candor and sincerity, Thayer determined to repair as far as possible the scandal he had given his Protestant friends. He returned to the coffee house to tell them of his conversion and to defend the sanctity of Benedict Joseph Labre. Some of them lamented his weakness; others made a jest of it. He invited a great number of his friends to be present when he was received publicly into the Catholic Church on May 25, 1783.⁹

Thayer after his conversion appears to have felt no hesitation as to his future vocation. He wished to become a priest in order that he might preach to his countrymen the faith which he had embraced. Pius VI received him several times and bestowed upon him a crucifix which he always treasured.¹⁰ On the advice of influential Catholic friends he went to France and entered an institution established at Navarre for recent converts. A letter which he took with him from Cardinal Antonelli, the Prefect of Propaganda, to the Papal Nuncio at Paris, dated September, 1773, read:

The bearer of this letter will be Mr. John Thayer, a native of Boston in New England, who, after a stay of some time in Rome, is going to Paris, to return from there to America. I recommend him very earnestly to the kindness of Your Lordship, begging you to favor him with your assistance, if he should need it in any way. He is a very worthy person, who during his stay here, felt himself moved by God to abjure the errors of his sect and become a Catholic, since which, he has given evidence of a true and stable conversion. Your Lordship, therefore, will use your good offices in behalf of a very deserving subject. . . .¹¹

Evidently Thayer did not present himself to the nuncio, for that worthy at Fontainebleau, October 20, 1783, wrote:

. . . When Mr. John Thayer, native of Boston, presents himself to me with the recommendation of the Sacred

⁹ François Charles Nagot, *Recueil de conversions remarquables* (1791), 2; Connolly, "John Thayer," *op. cit.*, 261-273.

¹⁰ Nagot, *op. cit.*, 88; Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 388.

¹¹ "Propaganda Documents," *Records*, XXI (1910), 197-198.

Congregation of Propaganda Fide, I will receive him well; and if he perseveres in the intention of adopting the ecclesiastical state, to serve his country as a missionary, and Mr. Franklin offers no objection to it, I will make use of the faculties with which I am invested by the Pontifical rescript that your Eminence has forwarded to me.¹²

The following year, October 18, 1784, Thayer entered the Seminary of St. Sulpice in Paris.¹³ Here he had for his counsellor and director the Reverend Mr. Nagot, Superior of St. Sulpice and head of the band of Sulpicians who came to Baltimore in 1791.¹⁴ For reasons not given, the Papal Nuncio at Paris seems not to have been kindly disposed towards Thayer. Benjamin Franklin, our envoy to France, writes in his private journal of July 1, 1784, of a call from the Papal Nuncio, Doria Pamphili, who informed him that the Holy Father, acting on his suggestion, had appointed the Reverend Mr. Carroll, Superior of the Catholic clergy in the United States. Franklin went on to say that in the course of their conversation the Nuncio "spoke lightly of their new Bostonian convert Thayer's conversion; that he had advised him not to go to America, but to settle in France. That he wanted to go to convert his countrymen; but he knew nothing yet of his new religion himself, etc. . . ."¹⁵

After a course of three years of ecclesiastical studies Thayer was ordained by the archbishop of Paris, June 2, 1787, for the Amer-

¹² *Ibid.*, 202.

¹³ Nagot, *op. cit.*, 92; Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 388.

¹⁴ Richard H. Clarke, "A Noted Pioneer Convert of New England, Reverend John Thayer, 1758-1815," *A. C. Q. R.*, XXIX (1904), 155.

¹⁵ John Bigelow, ed., *op. cit.*, VIII, 512-513. When Thayer went to France in 1781, he had visited Franklin and requested to be appointed his chaplain, but the philosopher-statesman replied that he could say his own prayers and save the country the expense of employing a chaplain.—M. J. Spalding, *Sketches of the Early Catholic Missions of Kentucky* (1844), 78-79. On September 13, 1783, Franklin wrote to his sister, Jane Mecom, from Passy: "Tell my Cousin Collas that the parson she recommended to me is gone to Rome, and it is reported has changed his Presbyterianism for the Catholic religion."—"Belknap Papers," *Collections*, 6th Series, IV (1891), 260.

ican missions.¹⁶ He was most anxious to return to his own home in order to labor for the spiritual good of his countrymen. He thus expressed his feelings in the history of his conversion:

. . . This is the prevailing wish, this is the only desire of my heart to extend as much as lies in my power the dominion of the true faith which is now my joy and comfort. I desire nothing more; for this purpose I wish to return to my country, in hopes not withstanding my unworthiness, to be the instrument of the conversion of my countrymen; and such is my conviction of the truth of the Catholic church and my gratitude for the signal grace of being called to the true faith, that I would willingly seal it with my blood, if God grant me this favor, and I doubt not but He would enable me to do it.

I entreat all those who shall peruse this narrative to pray with fervor to the Father of lights and the God of mercies to bless the designs of His unworthy servant, and to open an easy access to the faith in my country and to cause it to shoot forth and fructify in a land in which it has been as yet imperfectly known. Perhaps—and I dwell with pleasure on the consoling thought—perhaps I say, He who raises up and casts down empires as he pleases, who does all for His elect and for the interest of His Church, has only permitted and brought to an end the surprising Revolution (the independence of the United States) of which we have been witnesses in order to accomplish some great design and much more happy revolution in the order of grace.¹⁷

Thayer did not return to the United States immediately, but awaited orders from Carroll, who had been appointed Prefect Apostolic three years previously. Carroll was under the impression that Father Thayer was waiting for the letter from Propaganda granting him the necessary faculties, which he had received long before.¹⁸ Thus he remained two more years abroad. During the

¹⁶ Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 388. On the following day, Trinity Sunday, Thayer celebrated his first Mass in the church of St. Sulpice.—Letter of Reverend François Charles Nagot, Director of St. Sulpice, cited by Merritt, *Sketches*, 215, footnote 1, from Räss *Die Conversionen seit der Reformation*, X, 347-348.

¹⁷ John Thayer, *Conversion*, 25-26.

¹⁸ Nagot, *op. cit.*, 99-100.

interval he went to London, where he labored for three months and made eleven conversions. He also established there three schools for the instruction of poor children in the Catholic religion.¹⁹ While he was engaged in this work, word came for him to be ready to set out for America as soon as he should hear from the Reverend Mr. Carroll. In November, 1787, he was again in Paris awaiting further direction. Young and energetic, Thayer was not content to remain inactive; so he applied himself to work among the Irish and English in the city.²⁰

When several months elapsed and still no letter came, Father Thayer again went to London, ready to return to France and embark for America the moment Carroll should write for him. His stay lasted an entire year, for he did not receive word from America until June, 1789.²¹ In the meantime he was busy working in London among the poor for whom he had a special attachment. In fact, his love of the poor was such that it caused him to reside in a retired quarter in a slum section. The Catholics there were for the most part Irish laborers. He became to them a real father, looking after their bodily and spiritual needs.²² Father Emery, Superior General of the Sulpicians, said that the change Thayer brought about in the lives of so many of these people was almost miraculous. During the years in London he had the happiness of receiving into the Church of his adoption thirty-six converts. A great many more conversions, though not completed, were far advanced when he left London.²³

Ever interested in the instruction of the young, Father Thayer was most anxious that the two schools of his establishment should continue to exist. With this end in view, before his departure for America he invited certain zealous Catholics of London to attend a dinner. Here he spoke to them of the necessity of education for the poor. He also invited one of the children of the school to address the gathering. As a result of this meeting a subscription

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 98.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 99. Students in the Irish Seminary in Paris became his penitents.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 100. That Thayer had some income is evidenced by his ecclesiastical studies and travels.

²² *Ibid.*, 100-101.

²³ *Ibid.*, 102.

was started by which he received sufficient funds, not only for the continuation of the two schools—one of which contained fifty boys, the other fifty girls,—but additional money to extend and improve them.²⁴

Father Emery has left a pen picture of Thayer as he saw the man. His life was one of penitence, his lodging a home of poverty. Bread and water with a few vegetables constituted his ordinary meal. He would accept no invitation to dinner or supper for fear that, if he dined, particularly with the rich, he would lose time that should be used in promoting the work of God.²⁵ All day found him employed in various good deeds, exhorting sinners, visiting the sick, or some other work of charity, piety, and zeal. He also went to the prisons and there administered the sacraments. The greater part of his evening was employed in distributing the alms he had collected during the day from the rich. Engaged in such work, he was happy and gay.²⁶

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 105-106.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 102-103.

²⁶ Nagot, *op. cit.*, 103-105. Thayer, who had taken St. Benedict Joseph Labre for his exemplar, imitated him in his manner of life as far as possible. While in the Seminary he spent vacations going on pilgrimages. He journeyed to La Trappe, where he spent a considerable time. He probably thought of joining the Trappists, but the active life of preaching appealed to him more strongly.—Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 388; Bridgett, *op. cit.*, 24.

While in the Seminary, Father Thayer visited Mr. and Mrs. John Adams, who were staying at Auteuil. Mrs. Abigail Adams in her letter to the Reverend John Shaw, January 18, 1785, recorded:

"We had a visit the other day from no less a person than Abbé Thayer in his habit, who has become a convert. His visit was to me, I suppose, for he was a perfect stranger to Mr. Adams. He told us he had spent a year at Rome, that he belonged to a seminary of St. Sulpice in Paris, *that he never knew what religion was until his conversion*, and that he designed to return to America in a year or two, to see if he could not convert his friends and acquaintances. After talking some time in this style, he began to question Mr. Adams if he believed the Bible, and to rail at Luther and Calvin; upon which Mr. Adams took him up pretty short, and told him he was not going to make a father confessor of him, that his religion was a matter he did not look upon himself accountable for to anyone but his Maker, and that he did not choose to hear Luther or Calvin treated in such manner. Mr. Abbé took his leave after some time, without any invitation to repeat his visit."—Abigail Adams, *Letters of Mrs. Adams* (1840), 270-271.

When the time came for Thayer's departure from London, he delivered his last discourse to a crowd that overflowed the hall in which he spoke.²⁷ He ended his sermon by recommending with great earnestness and zeal the invocation of the saints, prayers for the faithful departed, and piety towards the angels and the Mother of God. Particularly did he counsel for the young people devotion to Jesus and Mary and the guardian angel as a preventive against sin and a means of advancing in virtue.²⁸

Thayer again returned to Paris, whence he set out for Nantes that he might embark on a vessel about to sail for the United States. Traveling by the way of Orleans and Tours, he visited the tomb of St. Martin, the "Thaumaturgus" of the French. Those who had heard of Father Thayer were anxious to see and converse with him. Several contributed generously to his project and furnished him with vestments and other articles for the celebration of Mass. On reaching Nantes, he experienced a like zeal and kindness from its people and especially from its bishop.²⁹

Late in the year he set sail for his native country. He had written to his brother Nathaniel from Paris and had expressed great pleasure that his change of faith had not broken the friendship and tenderness between the two.³⁰ On his arrival here, he first went to Baltimore where he was kindly received by Bishop-elect Carroll with whom he traveled to Philadelphia and thence proceeded to his native city, Boston, which he reached on January 4, 1790.³¹ Thayer was much pleased at the reception accorded him. His return had been anticipated in the local press as early as September, 1788. The *Massachusetts Centinel* of January 6, 1790, announced "The Reverend John Thayer on the 16 ult. arrived at Baltimore from Havre-de-Grace, and we are informed, is now in this town. . . ."³² The Reverend William Bentley of Salem tran-

²⁷ Nagot, *op. cit.*, 117.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 118-119.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 121-122.

³⁰ John Thayer, *Conversion*, 26.

³¹ After his departure Father Thayer wrote two letters to the Reverend Mr. Emery. The first was dated February 12, 1790, and related the story of his voyage. The second, dated Boston, July 17, was received by Father Emery towards the end of September.—Nagot, *op. cit.*, 84, 123-124.

³² *Massachusetts Centinel*, January 6, 1790, page 3; Merritt, *Sketches*, 216.

scribed in his diary, January 7: "On Saturday last arrived at Boston the noted John Thayer formerly of Boston, educated at Yale College, sometime Chaplain at the Castle, now a convert to the Catholic Roman faith. The singularity of his conduct before his conversion has made this visit a subject of curious nature. It is supposed he has an American mission. . . ." ³³ According to the late Monsignor Connolly of Boston, the sentiments expressed by the press were an indication of the feelings of many. Some evinced a true spirit of toleration and welcomed Thayer, but others made offensive attacks upon him. Monsignor Connolly concluded that the kindness was in some instances more apparent than real, and that many still looked with deeply-rooted bigotry upon everything Catholic. ³⁴

The condition of the newly organized Catholic Church in Boston was unfortunate. After our Revolution French and Irish immigrants began to take up their residence in Boston and other eastern seaport towns. The Irish, victims of England's program of economic degradation, were looked down upon. The French arrivals belonged to an upper stratum of society and brought with them aristocratic prepossessions. The uprisings in Santo Domingo, followed by the repercussions of the French Revolution, drove many emigrés to the United States. In 1793, when the British attempted to conquer the island, nine-tenths of the inhabitants fled. ³⁵ The nobility also fled from the French possessions of Guadeloupe and Martinique. At the request of some of the

³³ William Bentley, *The Diary of William Bentley, D.D.* (1905), I, 135. Bentley's entry would seem to establish the day of Thayer's arrival on January 2, but Thayer himself in a letter says that he arrived in Boston, January 4.—*United States Catholic Magazine* [hereafter referred to as *U. S. C. M.*], VIII (1849), 116; Merritt, *Sketches*, 216.

³⁴ Connolly, "John Thayer," *op. cit.*, 268. Thayer had written an account of his conversion which was first published in London in 1787 and then in French at Paris. The English copy ran through several editions and was reprinted in Baltimore in 1788, in Hartford, 1790, and by the French in Canada about the same time; Spanish, Portuguese, and German editions also appeared. See Joseph Sabin, *A Dictionary of Books Relating to America* (1934) XXV, 86-92. The account was widely read and soon elicited sneers and taunts in the newspapers of the day.—Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 389; Arthur J. Riley, *op. cit.*, 90.

³⁵ Jones, *op. cit.*, 133-134.

French Catholics, Mr. Thomas Walley, a merchant of Boston and prominent figure of Brookline who later married a French refugee from Martinique,³⁶ had invited Abbé de la Poterie from a French ship in the harbor to say Mass for the Catholics.³⁷ Poterie had acceded to the request, and on Sunday, November 2, 1788, "the Roman Catholic Chapel in School Street was opened and consecrated."³⁸ Mr. Walley, a non-Catholic at the time, did not know that the Abbé was under the interdict of the Archbishop of Paris. Poterie's actions were such that the following year Dr. Carroll sent the Reverend William O'Brien of New York to New England to examine the charges brought against him. The investigation ended in the withdrawal of faculties from Poterie and the appointment of Abbé Louis de Rousselet, another French priest, whose history before his arrival was also unknown.³⁹

Bishop-elect Carroll anticipated consoling results from the ministry of Thayer in his native town. He therefore appointed him assistant to Abbé Rousselet. The latter had scandalized his little flock, numbering about sixty Catholics. Bishop Plessis notes in his "Journal" that Rousselet did not view with a favorable eye the arrival of Thayer and "cabaled against him with the Protestants; he found means also of retaining a party of adherents among the Catholics. Thus the congregation, though small in number, was divided into two parties. . . ."⁴⁰ Thayer had been in Boston

³⁶ Thomas Walley married Elizabeth Lalung Férol, a French lady of Martinique, July 31, 1798.—Harriet Wood, *Historical Sketches of Brookline, Massachusetts* (1874), 212. Walley was received into the Catholic Church by Bishop Cheverus in 1814.—*Records*, XIV (1903), 319-320, and XVIII (1907), 44. The large west room of their home in Brookline was fitted out as a private chapel for the family. Bishop Plessis spoke of his visit there in 1815 with Bishop Cheverus.—*Records*, XV (1904), 388-389.

³⁷ "Letter from Thomas Walley," *Records*, XVIII (1907), 44-46.

³⁸ *Independent Chronicle*, November 6, 1788, page 3; Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 315; "Early History of the Catholic Church in Boston," *U. S. C. M.*, VIII (1849), 102-104.

³⁹ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 13-39; Merritt, *Sketches*, 191-193. Cf. Guilday, *John Carroll*, 286. Rousselet appears also to have been under the interdict of the Archbishop of Paris. The comments regarding him are vague and various. See second paragraph of Note 55 of this chapter.

⁴⁰ Lionel St. George Lindsay, "Pastoral Visitation of Bishop Plessis of Quebec," *Records*, XV (1904), 383.

only two days when, on January 6, 1790, he addressed a letter to Bishop Carroll in which he asked to be made head of the Church in New England.⁴¹ It was not until January 10, 1790, that Thayer officiated for the first time in Holy Cross Church.⁴² About a fortnight after his arrival he suffered a serious illness, not unrelated perhaps to the discord that prevailed.⁴³ By March his health was

⁴¹ Baltimore Cathedral Archives printed in *Researches*, XXVIII (1911), 99-100. In this letter Thayer says: "I suppose, Sir, you believe my intention so pure as not to wish this from desire of domination or superiority."

⁴² Merritt, *Sketches*, 216, quoting *Boston Gazette* of Jan. 11, 1790, page 3. Cf. Samuel Breck, *Recollections* (1877), 117.

⁴³ Nagot, *op. cit.*, 124-127. In a letter to Father Nagot, July 17, 1790, Thayer said the danger appeared so serious that he requested the Holy Viaticum of a French clergyman with whom he was associated "in the work of the Lord and of His church." He then proceeded to tell of his reception in Boston:

I reached Boston on the 4th of January last, and have everywhere been received with the most flattering attention. My own relatives expressed the greatest joy at my return. The Governor of the State, whose chaplain I formerly was, has promised to do all in his power to forward my views, and favor the work for which I have been sent to Boston. I have received nothing but kindness and attention from the ministers of the town. Many of them have visited me, and evinced a degree of cordiality which I had little reason to expect. The officers of the custom-house have also carried their politeness so far as to be unwilling to take anything for the many large boxes which I had procured from France and England, having looked upon their contents as things designed for sacred purposes.

On the first Sunday after my arrival, I announced the word of God, and all flocked in crowds to hear me. A great degree of curiosity is manifested to become acquainted with our belief, and the free toleration allowed here has enabled me to enter into a full exposition of it. But I was not long in a condition to satisfy the curiosity and eagerness of the people of Boston. [Tells of his illness.] When my health was sufficiently restored, I resumed my functions of preaching, confessing and visiting the few sheep that compose our little flock.

On every occasion the Protestants evince the same degree of eagerness and come and hear me; but they content themselves with that. The indifference and philosophy which prevail here as much as anywhere else, are an obstacle to the fruit of preaching, which it is exceedingly difficult to remove—an obstacle however, which does not in the least discourage me. I have had the pleasure of receiving a few recantations, and our dear neophytes afford me great consolation by the sanctity of their life. . . . I am

sufficiently restored to warrant the resumption of his duties. On the tenth of the month he administered his first baptism in Boston. Connolly takes it for granted that Thayer remained in Boston during the first year after his return because he administered and recorded several baptisms during 1790.⁴⁴ It is known, however, that he extended his visitation to the Catholic families in the adjacent towns, for on April 21, 1790, Bentley recorded in his diary that he had received "a letter from Thayer, the Romish missionary," requesting him to give him the names of the Catholics in Salem, a proper place for staying, and a convenient place for saying Mass and preaching.⁴⁵ When Thayer reached Salem, the first week in May, Bentley not only received him into his own house, but went with him to see the members of the Catholic faith in that town and gave him the opportunity of celebrating Mass daily.⁴⁶ On returning to Boston, Thayer left in Bentley's charge his clerical vestments, altar stone, altar card, a missal and some four hundred books and pamphlets.⁴⁷

In the meantime relations between Rousselet and Thayer became more and more strained. Thayer was supported by the Irish and the Americans, Rousselet by the French. Both parties appealed to Bishop Carroll. Finally Thayer, in the early summer of 1790, dispossessed Rousselet by securing a lease of the church

engaged in instructing a few Protestants, whom I hope to restore shortly to our common Mother. I recommend our mission most earnestly to your prayers. We are in want of laborers for the cultivation of the immense field which has been long abandoned in these United States. Signed Thayer, Boston, July 17th, 1790.—Fenwick "Memoirs," 83-84; *U. S. C. M.*, VIII (1849), 116.

⁴⁴ "Martia 10, 1790. Bostonii baptizata est Sarah filia Joanathan et Susanna Chapman ex legitmo conjugio Nata die 4 a Februarii, 1789 P. P. fuere Patritius et Maria Campbell. Am. J. Thayer, Miss. Apos."—Connolly, "John Thayer," *op. cit.*, 269.

⁴⁵ Bentley, *op. cit.*, I, 161.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 162, 165. Bentley also spoke of going with Thayer to see the Reverend Mr. Oliver with the expectation of being amused at the interview. He was not disappointed for he related that Oliver's bigotry "joined to an honest and uninformed mind," was no match for the "insulting triumph of a Catholic, who had gained no humility by his conversion."

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 165-166.

from the owners.⁴⁸ Bentley, who followed the controversy with interest, noted on Monday, September 20, 1790:

The matter of the *Catholic Church* in Boston is debated in the Boston papers. Thayer appeared in the *Centinel* of last Saturday, and bids defiance to his enemies, and refused to give any satisfaction in the *Gazette*. While the Catholics are divided, their adversaries have nothing to boast. . . .⁴⁹

French and Irish feeling ran so high that when M. L'Arrive of Guadeloupe died in Boston, November 4, 1790, when Rousselet was on a visit to the mission among the Penobscot Indians, the family and friends of the deceased, unwilling to avail themselves of the services of the Reverend Mr. Thayer, requested Dr. Samuel Parker, a tolerant Episcopalian divine, to read the Protestant Church rites at his funeral. When Rousselet came home,⁵⁰ he persuaded the widow to let him say a *Requiem*, and for this purpose obtained leave of Dr. Parker and the vestry of his church.⁵¹ The controversies between the two factions came to such a pass that in the latter part of May, 1791, Bishop Carroll paid a visit to Boston to examine the situation and adjust the matter.⁵² He was received in a most friendly manner and was the recipient of many attentions. Bentley found him "to be an intelligent and very agreeable man."⁵³ Belknap in a letter to Ebenezer Hazard from

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 192. Cf. Fenwick, "Memoirs," 82; Connolly, "John Thayer," *op. cit.*, 266; Merritt, *Sketches*, 219; Lindsay, "Pastoral Visitation," *op. cit.*, 383; Letter of Thayer to Bishop Carroll relating the disturbed condition of the Church in Boston, *Records*, XXII (1911), 305.

⁴⁹ Bentley, *op. cit.*, I, 196.

⁵⁰ *Columbian Centinel*, November 24, 1790, page 3, announced the opening of a "Day and Evening School for the French and Spanish Languages."

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, November 10, 1790; Merritt, *Sketches*, 199-202; "Belknap Papers," *op. cit.*, 5th series, III, 240-241. Dr. Belknap says that the French and Irish could not meet without quarreling; however, he thought it not "advisable to publish the story" in his locality, where the "Papists" were "numerous and respectable. The best way to destroy Popery in this country is to let it alone." *Ibid.*, 243.

⁵² Carroll suspended Rousselet and confirmed Thayer as pastor.—*Columbian Centinel*, June 18, 1791, page 3. Merritt makes no mention of the suspension.

⁵³ Bentley, *op. cit.*, I, 262.

Boston on June 11, 1791, told his friend that Carroll was "treated with the greatest attention and respect by most of our distinguished characters; but the cause he means to serve is not the foundation of this respect: it is wholly owing to his personal character."⁵⁴

The Bishop succeeded in making peace for the time being between the French and Irish Catholics, the former consenting to abide by Carroll's decision and accept Father Thayer as their pastor.⁵⁵ However, a letter written by Bishop Carroll to his friend,

⁵⁴ "Belknap Papers," *op. cit.*, 5th series, III, 263; Merritt, *Sketches*, 206.

⁵⁵ Guilday, *John Carroll*, 425, citing Baltimore Cathedral Archives, Case 10F. The late Percival Merritt in his *Sketches*, 315-316, defends Rousselet, but Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 387-389, impresses one with the fact that the abbé, in spite of his affability, was not all that a priest should be. Merritt makes Rousselet appear a victim of circumstances caused by his predecessor, Poterie, who had contracted unwarranted debts, and to these difficulties were added the aggressive opposition on the part of his colleague and successor. After the departure of Carroll, Rousselet went to the Indian missions, where he stayed until the summer of 1792. Guilday, *John Carroll*, 606, says that the situation of the Maine Indians was not bettered when Rousselet went to live among them. Merritt tries to show that the aspersions cast on Rousselet were unjustified and points to the fact that when Rousselet returned to Boston in September, 1792, he was called upon to perform a marriage ceremony among the French, at which nuptial the French made a collection of two hundred dollars which was presented to him. Had not Rousselet been a good priest, Merritt thinks that it would have been highly improbable that "good Catholics," as he characterized them, would have selected Rousselet to perform the marriage or that such an action would have been sanctioned by Matignon, who had now superseded Thayer as pastor of Holy Cross Church. Merritt is probably right when he maintains that he should not be linked with Poterie as a man of similar character.

According to Merritt, *Sketches*, 210-218, Rousselet returned to Martinique at the request of a number of its inhabitants where he fulfilled the duties of an apostolic missionary. There, it is stated, he was put to death with some three hundred French Royalists, who had sided with the English against the French Revolutionists. Cf. Thomas Coke, *History of the West Indies* (1808), II, 396, 400, and "Early History of the Church in Boston," *U. S. C. M.*, VIII (1849), 103. The latter article says that at the time when Rousselet and a number of French inhabitants were condemned to the guillotine, Rousselet addressed his fellow prisoners, informed them that he was a suspended priest without faculties in ordinary cases, but that under the circumstances in which they then were, his powers were ample for the

Charles Plowden of London, on June 11, 1791, indicated that he was not satisfied with the situation. Although pleased at the reception accorded him in Boston, he expressed regret that he did not have there a clergyman of "amiable, conciliatory manners, as well as of real ability," for the Catholics numbered about one hundred twenty. He thought it probable that there were more who, in consequence of inter-marriage, long disuse, and worldly motives, declined to make acknowledgment of the faith.⁵⁶

Before leaving Boston on June 16, Bishop Carroll exacted from Thayer a statement of submission, for the latter had been accused of saying that he would not acknowledge the bishop, but would place himself under the jurisdiction of the pope. The statement, signed at Boston, June 13, 1791, declared:

. . . he does acknowledge and will submit to the authority of the Bishop in case his removal is required by him and this shall be binding on him until a general regulation respecting the power of the Bishop in removing Clergymen be settled by common consent of the American clergy.⁵⁷

In the fall of 1791 Thayer attended the diocesan synod which met at Baltimore.⁵⁸ It may reasonably be inferred that he visited his old friend, Father Nagot who had arrived in Baltimore on July 10, 1791, to establish the first seminary in the United States. Among the seminarians who accompanied Fathers Nagot, Lavadoux, Tessier, Garnier, and Montdésir was John Floyd, a native of England. He had been drawn to the Catholic Church by the

tribunal of penance and that he would hear confessions of as many of them as were desirous of approaching the sacrament. Many made profession of their faith.

⁵⁶ *U. S. C. M.*, VIII (1849), 149-150.

⁵⁷ *Researches*, IX (1892), 42, from the Baltimore Archives. Cf. Merritt, *Sketches*, 220; Guilday, *John Carroll*, 427. Father John Thorpe, English penitentiary and agent of the English Missions at the Holy Sea, had written to Carroll from Rome in 1790 that Thayer was a man that would bear watching.—E. I. Devitt, S.J., "Letters from the Archiepiscopal Archives of Baltimore," *Records*, XIX (1908), 233.

⁵⁸ *U. S. C. H. M.*, II (1888), 218-219; Guilday, *John Carroll*, 432, and *Councils of Baltimore*, 65.

narrative of Thayer's conversion, and it was by Thayer's advice that he entered the Seminary of St. Sulpice at Paris. Mr. Floyd was sent as catechist to Fell's Point, a district in the southeastern part of Baltimore.⁵⁹ On December 17, 1795, Bishop Carroll ordained him to the priesthood, and he was placed in charge of the mission at Fell's Point. His congregation, though poor, were inspired by him to erect St. Patrick's Church. While visiting a victim of the yellow fever, Father Floyd contracted the disease and succumbed to it September 4, 1797. He was buried at his request before the door of the modest church he had built.⁶⁰

Thayer's influence was also felt as a controversialist and an apologist. The aggressive Puritan became a militant Catholic. He was the first to attempt to gain a public hearing for the doctrines of the Catholic Church. In November, 1790, Mr. Thayer published in the *Centinel* of Boston the following advertisement:

Mr. Thayer, Catholic Priest of Boston, fully persuaded that he has found the inestimable treasure of the Gospel, is greatly desirous of imparting it to his dear countrymen. For this purpose, he offers to preach on the evenings of the week-days, in any of the neighboring towns. If any persons desire to hear the exposition of the Catholic faith (of which the majority of Americans have so mistaken an idea) and will furnish any place for the accommodation of hearers, Mr. Thayer will be ever ready to attend to them. He will also undertake to answer the objections any gentleman would wish to make either publicly or privately to the doctrine he preaches; and promises that if any one can convince him he is man [in] error, he will make as public and solemn a recantation of his present belief, as he has done of the Protestant religion in which he was educated.—Freely he has received—freely he gives. N. B. He may be seen every morning at half past nine, at his Church, in School Street, or at other hours may be found at his lodgings, No. 82 Newburg Street.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Charles G. Herbermann, *The Sulpicians in the United States* (1916), 70.

⁶⁰ Shea, *Catholic Church in United States*, II, 416-417; Joseph W. Ruane, *The Beginnings of the Society of St. Sulpice in the United States, 1791-1825* (1935), 41.

⁶¹ *Columbian Centinel*, November 24, 1790, page 3; Merritt, *Sketches*, 221.

Though the neighboring towns did not bother to avail themselves of the offer to hear doctrines about which they were told they had a mistaken idea, Father Thayer's challenge, as it came to be regarded by the ministers, gained a hearing in the newspapers. George Leslie, a Congregational minister at Washington, New Hampshire, having read the proposition, announced, "As the gauntlet is thrown down by Mr. Thayer it is taken up by George Leslie."⁶² Mr. Thayer replied in the *Columbian Centinel* of January 26, 1791, with an invitation to Mr. Leslie, "or any other Minister to appoint me a time and place in Boston, or any of the neighboring towns, for the combat proposed. . . . Perhaps Mr. Leslie's desire is to dispute in the publick papers—if this be the design of his challenge, I will begin as soon as any Printer will consent to give our controversies a place."⁶³

The *Gazette* offered Thayer space. He accepted the invitation and sent his first article for publication. Under a number of heads he stated simply and clearly the principles of the Catholic faith. Leslie did not respond at once; he thus subjected himself to some rather caustic criticisms. Finally the *Herald of Freedom* for July 1, 1791, announced:

The Reverend Mr. Leslie has, after a consideration of five months, come forward in the *Newbury Port Paper*, and beat a *row down* on the *Infallibility Drum*. This we believe was one of the stipulated *Non disputables* which even Mr. Thayer, who feels himself strong enough to attack the whole Host of Clergy on other controverted points, does not choose to venture on.⁶⁴

Leslie, therefore, instead of answering Thayer on the doctrines propounded, had concentrated his efforts on an attack against the doctrine of infallibility. Thayer replied to all the objections of his opponent, disposing of them one by one with plausible and logical argument.⁶⁵

⁶² *Ibid.*, January 19, 1791, page 3. Notice of "Ecclesiastick Duel."

⁶³ *Ibid.*, January 26, 1791, page 1; Merritt, *Sketches*, 221.

⁶⁴ Merritt, *Sketches*, 222, citing *The Herald of Freedom*, July 1, 1791, page 3.

⁶⁵ John Thayer, *Catholic Controversy Maintained in the Periodical Publications . . .* (1793), 12-40.

As Leslie made no rejoinder, Thayer after the lapse of a year wrote :

I have expected your reply for a full year ; and, as none has appeared, I have a right to conclude that you do not find the Catholic doctrine in this point totally unscriptural and absurd. . . .⁶⁶

In July, 1792, a lawyer named John Gardiner began to prosecute the debate and in such an abusive tone that sympathies were aroused. He cast aspersions on the Catholic Church and on Thayer's conversion. *The Columbia Centinel* of July 7, 1792, reproduced a part of Mr. Gardiner's speech. Thayer replied in the issue of July 11. Gardiner then published an assault on Thayer, July 14, in an article signed "Barebones," attributing the priest's conversion to the "miraculous working bones" of Benedict Joseph Labre. Gardiner's reply being one of personal abuse and ridicule in which he designated his antagonist as Pope Thayer, Sachem, Holiness, and Barebones, Thayer appeared to better advantage by treating his opponent with "truly popish deference," moderation, and politeness. In his reply Father Thayer said :

When men of sense and learning substitute vain and indecent declamation in place of solid reason, they give strong suspicion that their cause is bad ; for if they were furnished with good arguments in its defence, they would produce them !⁶⁷

Meanwhile, because of the French Revolution, thousands of the best clergymen of France were exiled from their native land. Four eminent priests, victims of the persecution, landed together in Baltimore on June 24, 1792. They were Francis Anthony Matignon, Ambrose Maréchal, Gabriel Richard, and Francis Chiquard.⁶⁸ Because of Thayer's controversial and generally belligerent attitude Bishop Carroll in August, 1792, sent Matignon to

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁶⁸ See Richard J. Purcell for sketches of Matignon, Maréchal, and Richard in *D. A. B.* (1933), XII, 278, 408-409, and (1935) XV, 549-550, also his "Father John Thayer of New England and Ireland," *Studies* (Dublin), June, 1942, 171-185.

take charge of Holy Cross parish.⁶⁹ As far as can be ascertained, Father Thayer accepted with submission this disposition of affairs. He was now in a position to give his restlessness free play, and he traveled to the different towns, lecturing, publishing, discussing, and baptizing.⁷⁰ He visited nearly every town of importance in Massachusetts, Dover and Portsmouth in New Hampshire, and Newport in Rhode Island.⁷¹ After many journeys Thayer appeared in Norwich, Connecticut. His arrival having been previously heralded, on a certain Sunday in November, 1793, Father Thayer accepted the invitation of the Reverend Joseph Strong to preach to a large group of townspeople in the First Congregational Church. The following Sunday evening the priest, appearing again in the same pulpit, discoursed on the "Invocations of the Saints and the Efficacy of Prayers to them."⁷² It is thought that other Connecticut towns were visited at the time by Father Thayer.⁷³

In the fall of 1793 Thayer published in pamphlet form the various articles treated in his controversies and also several anonymous newspaper communications to him with his replies.⁷⁴ He also included a letter which he had written to the Reverend

⁶⁹ *U. S. C. H. M.*, II (1888), 132.

⁷⁰ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 231; Byrne, *op. cit.*, I, 121.

⁷¹ *U. S. C. H. M.*, II (1888), 271.

⁷² F. M. Caulkins, *History of Norwich* (1866), 472; B. T. Marshall, ed., *A Modern History of New London County* (1922), I, 317; Byrne, *op. cit.*, II, 414. A newspaper item of November 14, 1793 read: "On Friday evening last, Mr. John Thayer, Catholic Missionary, delivered to a large audience at the Rev. Joseph Strong's meeting house in this city, a learned and ingenious discourse in which he undertook to prove that the Catholic Church was the only true Church of Christ. On Sunday evening following at the same place he had delivered a discourse on the propriety and true piety of invoking departed saints and the utility and efficacy of addressing prayers to them."—Caulkin, *op. cit.*, 472.

⁷³ Thomas S. Duggan, *The Catholic Church in Connecticut* (1930), 15; Byrne, *op. cit.*, II, 117. James Fitton in his *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England* (1872), 188-189, says that Father Matignon delivered the first public Catholic sermon in Hartford at the invitation of the Reverend Dr. Strong about 1813.

⁷⁴ Thayer's apologetical literature may be found in Fenwick's "Memoirs," 85-287.

Jeremy Belknap on July 26, 1793, after reading the latter's *History of New Hampshire and the Discovery of America*. While writing in a respectful manner, Thayer did not hesitate to tell Belknap that though he showed "liberality in many of his remarks, he had totally disfigured the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church." He then proceeded to give a full refutation of the charges adduced against Catholicity. Belknap replied privately to acknowledge the receipt of his letter which he put "into his file" entitled *Consideranda*.⁷⁵

Towards the end of 1793 Bishop Carroll sent Thayer to Alexandria. As the town had no regular place of worship, Father Thayer held services in the house of Colonel Fitzgerald. The priest was not satisfied and wrote to his bishop that he did not feel at home, for the Colonel, "though he says nothing . . . seems rather to regard the priest upon the whole as a burden."⁷⁶ To this accusation Martin I. J. Griffin has replied: "Perhaps the Colonel respected the Priest but not the person of Father Thayer, who was somewhat erratic in temper and behavior."⁷⁷ It would probably be more accurate to ascribe Thayer's eccentricity to his eagerness to convert the world overnight and to his devotion to fixed ideals. Thus apparently he could not accommodate himself to the place because of his horror of slavery. Accordingly, he asked Bishop Carroll to be relieved of duty at Alexandria. The Bishop responded July 15, 1794:

I cannot easily resolve myself to grant you a letter of *exeat* while the Diocese is in such pressing need of Clergymen; nor can I think that the reasons, alleged, to wit, your difficulties concerning Negroes, is sufficient to justify either your departure from the service of the

⁷⁵ John Thayer, *Controversy*, 154-161; "Belknap Papers," *Collections*, 6th Series, IV (1891), 539-546. George Ticknor is quoted in the latter work in a footnote, page 539, as saying that Mr. Thayer was "a connexion of Dr. Belknap."

⁷⁶ Martin I. J. Griffin, "Colonel Fitzgerald," *Researches*, XXVI (1909), 82. Griffin had no sympathy for Father Thayer.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* Cf. *U. S. C. H. M.*, III (1890), 131; Richard J. Purcell, "A Catholic Revolutionary Soldier and Patriot," *Thought*, VIII (1933-1934), 483-484.

Diocese, or my allowance of it. While you confine yourself within the bounds of solid doctrine, you may act freely and unrestrained by any ecclesiastical interference, in remedying the abuses of slavery; and when you have done your duty if all the good effect possible and desirable does not accrue from your endeavors you must bear that, as every pastor must bear many disorders which will subsist in spite of his most zealous exertions. . . .⁷⁸

That Thayer was impatient of results is evidenced by his letter to Carroll from Notley Hall, an old manor in southern Maryland. He had been given an acre of ground at Alexandria, and so he writes, April 10, 1795: "I wish you would quicken Colonel Fitzgerald with respect to the building of the Chapel. It depends now wholly on him."⁷⁹

In 1796 a number of parishioners of St. Peter's Church in New York City made application to the Bishop that Father Thayer be appointed as an assistant pastor to the Reverend William O'Brien, O.P. Father Thayer felt, no doubt, that he could accomplish more for religion in New York than in Virginia. The parish had grown too large for Father O'Brien, and the spiritual welfare of the congregation was suffering.⁸⁰ As Father O'Brien, however, made decided objections to receiving Father Thayer, Bishop Carroll would not enforce on him an assistant who did not enjoy his confidence. Thayer wrote Carroll, June 21, 1796, asking that, in the event that he could not be placed at New York or Philadelphia, his *exeat* should be granted.⁸¹ The bishop in his reply of July 5, 1796, "complied reluctantly" with his request while wishing

⁷⁸ Devitt, *op. cit.*, XX (1909), 58-59. It was evidently during his stay in Virginia that Thayer visited Norfolk and Portsmouth as stated by Connolly in *U. S. C. H. M.*, II (1888), 27.

⁷⁹ Griffin, "Fitzgerald," *op. cit.*, 83. A small chapel was built in 1796 under the direction of Father Francis Neale on a plot of ground donated by Robert T. Hooe, a non-Catholic merchant and later mayor of Alexandria.—Purcell, "Revolutionary Soldier," *loc. cit.*, 484.

⁸⁰ The Memorial by the trustees to Bishop Carroll may be found in *Researches*, VIII (1891), 133-135. Cf. *Researches*, XXVIII (1911), 24-25; *Records*, VIII (1897), 133; Leo Ryan, *Old St. Peter's* (1935), 73-74. See Carroll's letter to O'Brien, *Researches*, XVII (1900), 14-15.

⁸¹ *Researches*, XXVIII (1911), 25.

him "more satisfaction than I have ever been able to procure for you."⁸²

Thayer next sought Canada. Bishop Jean François Hubert of Quebec wrote to Carroll, November 26, 1796:

My Lord: The renowned Mr. Thayer has arrived in my diocese. The fact would give me much pleasure were it not for two important points. The first is the strict surveillance that the government at this time is keeping over foreigners, owing to some uprising among the people and their leaning toward republican principles. The second is that Mr. Thayer, who seems to want to pass the winter in Canada without telling for what object, did not take the precaution to furnish himself with a recommendation from you, although he has one addressed to one of my vicars general by Mr. Matignon who could not have refused giving it with any sense of propriety or friendship. I confess to you, my Lord, that Mr. Thayer's omission on this head has surprised me; for I can hardly believe that your extensive diocese so abounds with laborers that you would willingly see one of them thus quit his post without your consent, and for so considerable a length of time. For these reasons I sacrificed my desire to make use of Mr. Thayer, and I have not given him any encouragement to stay with us. I trust you will bear no ill feeling towards me for this, no matter what may be your consideration for this person whom they say is a man of great worth. . . .

Signed Jean Franc, Bishop of Quebec⁸³

⁸² *Ibid.*, XVII (1900), 14-15. About this time, Carroll received a request for admission to his diocese from Thayer's friend, John Burke of Cork, who had been forced by the French Revolution to withdraw from the Irish College in Paris where he had been superior. Father Burke was accepted and served well until he died of the yellow fever, 1799, while officiating at St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia.—*Records*, XXIII (1912), 41.

⁸³ Lionel St. George Lindsay, "Correspondence between the Sees of Quebec and Baltimore, 1788-1847, from the Archiepiscopal Archives at Quebec," *Records*, XVIII (1907), 178-179. A present-day annalist of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Canada relates that in 1797 the Reverend John Thayer visited the community at Montreal to enlist the prayers of the Sisters for the success of his project in the home mission field.—Doyle, *op. cit.*, 248-249.

Father Thayer returned to the United States and engaged in general missionary work. When the first Catholic Church was being built in Albany, New York, Father Thayer was there. The records list him as the first pastor.⁸⁴ He is known to have been in Boston during May, 1798, for on the ninth of that month he preached a sermon at the Catholic church on the occasion of a National Fast recommended by President John Adams for "Humiliation and Prayer throughout the United States." An editorial in *The Centinel* for May 30 comments, "in point of federalism, independence, information, and true American spirit, Mr. Thayer's sermon on the Fast day, at the Catholic Church, ranks foremost in the patriotic effusions of the day."⁸⁵

Thayer had his sermon printed at "the pressing invitation of those who heard it."⁸⁶ He advertised that proceeds of the sale were to be applied to the "building and ornamenting of a place of worship for the Roman Catholics of Boston."

As early as April 11, 1796, Father Badin, who had been in charge of the missions in Kentucky since 1793, wrote to Bishop Carroll asking that either Father Thayer or Father Neaie be sent to assist him. He would gladly accept both, and others also.⁸⁷ On August 24, 1796, he again asked for Thayer, Cahil, or Neale.⁸⁸ His note of March 4, 1798, reads :

. . . We hear of the famous Tom Paine having died a Roman Catholic in Philadelphia and of Mr. Thayer being now a Methodist preacher. I am apprehensive the first news is a story and the second a calumny.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ John Dillon, *The Historic Story of Saint Mary's, Albany, New York* (1933), 68-99. The cornerstone was laid by Thomas Barry, September 13, 1797, by the arrangement of Bishop Carroll.

⁸⁵ *Columbian Centinel*, May 30, 1798, page 2; Merritt, *Sketches*, 227.

⁸⁶ John Thayer, *A Discourse Delivered at the Roman Catholic Church in Boston on the 9th of May, 1798*. Other preachers in Boston, whose sermons were published, were Jeremy Belknap, Jedidiah Morse, and John Thornton Kirkland.

⁸⁷ Devitt, *op. cit.*, XIX, 262. Catholic emigrants from Maryland were seeking new homes in the West.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 461.

On August 13, 1798, Father Badin addressed his Bishop in these words:

. . . We have been expecting here Rev'd Mr. Thayer, these four months past. I attribute his delay to his zeal, as he must have met on his way with numbers of souls that stand in need of his evangelical services. It is both prudent and just that he succeed me as your Vicar General; in acknowledging this, however, I cannot help expressing at the same time some desire of remaining, if you judge fit, the Pastor of Pottinger Creek, where I have most authority. . . .⁹⁰

A letter of Father Matignon to Bishop Carroll, which is not dated, but which was evidently written in 1798, says:

. . . Messrs. Thayer and Cheverus beg of us to accept their homage. The first will leave, I believe, in two or three weeks for the mission you destine him for. . . .⁹¹

It was not until 1799 that Thayer reached Kentucky. Father Badin on February 20, 1799, thanked Bishop Carroll for sending him Fathers Thayer and Salmon. Thayer was assigned to Scott City, now Frankfort, Kentucky. Badin was apprehensive because of the "narrow heart and the philosophies or vices of some rich members of the small congregation." He expressed the hope "that the residence of a virtuous and learned Priest among them will dissipate his fears and their passions."⁹² Father Badin visited Thayer during Lent of that year. He sent Bishop Carroll on June 3, 1799, the following account of his visit:

I am happy to inform you that the congregation have received with open arms and hearts their Pastor. He had been longed after for a good while and public opinion was in his favor. The Protestant ministers look on him

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 464.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Jean Louis Lefebvre de Cheverus was invited in 1795 by Dr. Matignon to join him in Boston. He arrived October 3, 1796. Both were respected as scholars, regarded as victims of Jacobinism, and appreciated for their unaggressive zeal.—Fenwick, "Memoirs," 236.

⁹² Devitt, *op. cit.*, XIX, 468.

with an envious eye seeing their meetings deserted by numbers of their hearers. Both Catholics and Protestants in the Cities of Washington and Nelson are anxious to see him and I look for his visit in a short time. He appeared to me somewhat dissatisfied and uncertain whether he would remain in Scott City, Ky. He intended to appropriate to himself the Church land and presbytery house with two negroes for 3 years services; then (gigantic plans!) he should make there a foundation of nuns and set the slaves at liberty, that he is a great Patron to. I made him suitable remonstrances and dissuaded him from harboring such thoughts and agreed with him that his salary would be more easily raised by receiving a tithe from his Parishioners. I am informed that he proposed (to) them since to give them his services provided they would pay him the twentieth part of their produce.⁹³

It would have been most remarkable if two such individualistic characters had not clashed. On July 5, 1799, Badin again wrote to Bishop Carroll after a visit to Thayer:

. . . I have visited Mr. Thayer a few weeks since in company of Mr. Salmon: he must be (tho we dare not as yet be persuaded of it) a worker of miracles to have his congregation endowed with the . . . [paper torn] of the first Christians. However, I believe (and I rejoice of it) that there has been a great reformation since his arrival there. He needs some friendly advice tho' it be not always welcome to him and proves often useless: for instance, he (gives) vent too freely (at least for Kentucky) to his political opinions; this impudence may be an obstacle to the success of his ministry among Protestants tho' he fancies the reverse is and will be the case. Also he enervates the authority of master over the negroes by being blindly and publicly devoted to their cause and even saying now and then that they are fully as virtuous as the white people of his congregation. In mentioning this I have no other view than to do good and to procure for him some advice from your Lordship whenever you see it reasonable.⁹⁴

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

The difficulties increased. Of the four years Thayer spent in Kentucky, only two were spent in regular parochial work.⁹⁵

In 1803 Thayer left for Europe. Back in the early days of his ministry in London, he had seen the need of Catholic schools. He still loved his native Boston and wished to see it become Catholic. He, therefore, resolved to put into execution a long cherished project of establishing in that city religious foundations. The necessary funds would be raised through charitable contributions. This was a new undertaking at the time and attracted much attention and not a little ridicule from his opponents.⁹⁶ The following excerpt from a letter to Matignon at Boston and written from London, June 3, 1805, will show his solicitude for an order of men in his native city:

The funds of the Scotch Benedictines of St. James, Ratisbon, have been lately seized by the elector. In this house there are four monks, viz., F. H. Graham (age 38), an universal genius; F. B. Sharp (30); F. B. Dessen, (27), and F. McIver (26), all learned and pious. There are also three or four other Scotch monks at St. James, Wirceburg. All these together with many other German religious suppressed, might by activity and exertion be obtained. You know that I am not easily discouraged, and that no efforts of mine will ever be wanting while life remains, and all without fee or reward. Exert yourself, my dear friend, and get the good Cheverus to do the same. There is a most glorious prospect before us; lands for establishment might surely be obtained cheap, or for nothing, from General Knox, from the holders of Waldo's and other patents in Maine, in New York from Cooper, etc., in Connecticut and Vermont from scattered Catholics. Mr. Salmon, Mr. Cheverus' friend, at Brompton, near Chatham, might be obtained for the mission by a line from him.⁹⁷

Needless to say, the project did not materialize.

Aside from excursions to the continent, it may be taken for granted that Thayer spent most of his time among his Irish

⁹⁵ Spalding, *op. cit.*, 81.

⁹⁶ John Begley, *The Diocese of Limerick* (1938), 278.

⁹⁷ Clarke, "Pioneer Convert," *op. cit.*, 165.

poor in London. Mr. Leonard Brooke of Lulworth Castle, England, wrote to Bishop Carroll concerning Thayer on January 31, 1807:

Mr. Thayer, the Bostonian convert is still with the monks of La Trappe, he has been there since the beginning of November last. What his real views and plans are in this part of the world are not altogether known. He told me he was only waiting here for some priests and nuns from France to return with him to Boston. But other reports say, with what grounds of truth I can't tell, that he is here for the purpose of negotiating the erections of three or four Bishoprics in America, and that he expects to be called to Rome for this purpose. This at least seems pretty certain that he is rather looked upon with coolness by some of the Vicar Apostolic and all of them view him with a distrustful eye as a busy, forward personage who whatever may be the real motive and object of his mission has no credentials or any sanction to show for it from you his immediate superior. . . .⁹⁸

At last, in 1811, Father Thayer found a kindred personality in Bishop Young of Limerick, who met the American priest on a visit to London. The acquaintance ripened into close friendship, and under Bishop Young's patronage Thayer took up his residence permanently at Limerick,⁹⁹ where he came to be revered as a saint. He aroused the enthusiasm of the Irish for their old faith, which had grown lukewarm under the long persecution of the penal laws. He kept a perpetual fast, ate neither meat nor eggs, and partook of only one daily meal, after his Mass in the morning. His day was spent in teaching catechism to the children, in visiting the poor, and in hearing confessions. At night, when the churches were closed, he continued to hear confessions in certain houses, especially in his own lodging. He had a great number of penitents, and so remarkable were they for their piety and exemplary lives that they were called "Thayerites" by those who, as the Irish

⁹⁸ E. I. Devitt, "Excerpts from Letters in the Archives of Baltimore," *Records*, XVIII (1907), 416.

⁹⁹ Begley, *op. cit.*, 277.

Redemptorist Bridgett remarked, "did not relish a piety superior to their own."¹⁰⁰

In order to lead souls to God, Father Thayer endeavored to make himself all to all and formed friendships with several families. At first he lodged over the shop of Mr. Bourke, a glover, and afterwards over the store of the Ryan brothers, who were cloth merchants. He still hoped to found a religious community of women in Boston, and with this end in view he applied to the Ursuline Convent at Cork to undertake another foundation of their Order in the United States, but they declined the offer.¹⁰¹ The two Ryan girls, Mary and Catherine, educated by the Ursulines at Thurles, were impressed by Father Thayer's words. Each sister, unknown to the other, expressed a desire to undertake the project. Father Thayer wrote to Bishop Cheverus of Boston and sent the letters of self-dedication of the two pious sisters. Reverend Richard Walsh of Limerick, successor to Bishop Young, who had died in 1813, also wrote and assured the Bishop that the Ryan sisters were chosen and providential instruments for the beginning of the projected sisterhood.¹⁰²

Bishop Cheverus, named first bishop of Boston in 1808, and Father Matignon joyously accepted the proposal and immediately wrote for them to come to Boston, promising that arrangements would be made for them to make their novitiate in Canada. Father Thayer busied himself in making every preparation for their

¹⁰⁰ Thomas E. Bridgett, "Rev. John Thayer," *The Irish Monthly*, X (1882), 80-81.

¹⁰¹ Thomas E. Bridgett, "Saintly Influences: Father Thayer and the Ursulines," *Irish Monthly*, XI (1883), 626. Thayer had formed the design of establishing a community of religious women in the United States soon after his ordination when he had visited the Ursuline convent of Bologne sur Mer. Having celebrated Mass several times in their chapel, he came to have a high regard for this Order and regretted that his land did not possess a foundation of Ursulines.—François J. Parenty, *Life of Saint Angela Merici* (1858), 234. Father Anthony Kohlmann, S.J., in 1812, introduced the Ursulines into New York, but they returned to Ireland in 1815.—Sister Mary Christina Sullivan, "Some Non-Permanent Foundations of Women in the United States (1793-1850)," *H.R.S.*, XXXI (1940), 42-43.

¹⁰² Bridgett, "Saintly Influences," *op. cit.*, 627.

voyage to America, but before arrangements were completed, the priest's health began to fail. During his illness he was faithfully nursed by his religious friends and future Ursulines, Mary and Catherine Ryan. He bore his excruciating suffering with patient cheerfulness and joy, and continued to hear confessions even on the very day of his death February 17, 1815.¹⁰³

The following notice of his death appeared in the Protestant *Orthodox Journal*, London, February, 1815:

On Friday, the 17th February, the Rev. Mr. Thayer breathed his last at his lodgings at Limerick, in the 57th year of his age. This lamented and much esteemed individual was a native of Boston in America, of respectable parents, gifted with great genius, a liberal mind, and unbounded love of study. He lived and died in the communion and ministry of his adoption, in a manner worthy of his eminent virtues and pious simplicity—he decked religion in mildness, and he reclaimed the wanderer by captivating the heart. In the social circle he was completely the gentleman, the scholar and the wit—he had an even gaiety of temper, a clearness and aptness of expression and facility of anecdote, rarely equalled, certainly never exceeded. No wonder his death is lamented but his is the death of the just.¹⁰⁴

Bentley in his diary of November, 1815, writes:

We learn the death of John Thayer at Limerick, Ireland. This man was known to me from his youth. . . . He was a man who had little in his manners or person to recommend him, but was a real Dreadnaught in adventures. He has officiated at my house. But was always thought worse than he ever deserved. Upon the whole he was as sincere in religion as anything.¹⁰⁵

Father Thayer died so poor that he left not the means to buy himself a tomb.¹⁰⁶ It is related that some time before his death

¹⁰³ Begley, *op. cit.*, 278; Bridgett, "Thayer," *op. cit.*, 81.

¹⁰⁴ Clarke, "Pioneer Convert," *op. cit.*, 166; *U. S. C. M.*, VIII (1849), 151.

¹⁰⁵ Bentley, *op. cit.*, IV, 362-363.

¹⁰⁶ Bridgett, "Thayer," *op. cit.*, 81.

he sold his gold watch to have money to give to the poor.¹⁰⁷ The funds which he had been collecting for the founding of a religious community of women in Boston amounted to between eight and ten thousand dollars, and these were bequeathed by him to Matignon for the undertaking. In 1817 the Ryan sisters arrived at Boston and were sent by Bishop Cheverus to the Ursuline Convent at Three Rivers, Canada, for their training. After their profession, October 4, 1819, they came to Boston, June 16, 1820. There they opened the first Catholic female academy in New England. Later they were joined by a third sister, Margaret, who was received into the convent at Boston.¹⁰⁸

In 1826 Bishop Benedict Joseph Fenwick, who had succeeded Bishop Cheverus in 1825, transferred the community to the suburbs of Charlestown.¹⁰⁹ There the Unitarian aristocracy swarmed in, drawn by the reputation these accomplished teachers had acquired for imparting courtly manners and elegant accomplishments so necessary for the "young females" of the time.¹¹⁰ The link binding the Ursulines to the Church in Boston was broken, however, when on the night of August 11, 1834, the convent was burned by a hostile mob of fanatics. It was never rebuilt, and the members of the community dispersed and joined the Ursuline communities established in New Orleans and Quebec.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, William Hartney arranged that Thayer should be buried in the vault with the former's relative, Dr. McMahon, Bishop of Killaloe. Later the Hartney remains were deposited in the same vault.—Linehan, *History of Limerick* (1866), 627. Nevertheless, Father Thayer left a will bequeathing all his property "both real and personal" to Bishop Cheverus and Father Matignon. The property seems to have consisted principally of books and papers. See copy of "Will of the Reverend John Thayer" in Appendix III, 226. After the death of Matignon, September 19, 1818, Bishop Cheverus became sole trustee of the funds.—Fenwick, "Memoirs," 267, 270.

¹⁰⁸ *Les Ursulines des Trois-Rivières* (1888), II, 211-225; Sullivan, *op. cit.*, 43-45, Benjamin de Costa, *In Memorial: Sister Sainte Claire* (1876), 6-10.

¹⁰⁹ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 283-287.

¹¹⁰ Robert H. Lord, "Religious Liberty in New England," *H. R. S.*, XXII (1932), 9; Richard J. Purcell, "Education and Irish Teachers in Massachusetts, 1789-1865," *Catholic Educational Review*, XXXIV (1936), 94-95.

¹¹¹ Sullivan, *op. cit.*, 47-53; *Les Ursulines des Trois-Rivières*, 225-231.

The convert is proverbially more demonstrative in his zeal than the born believer. Men who have undergone great mental trials, whose solution of life's problems has been attained at a cost, will not, and perhaps cannot, live on the surface of being. The Reverend Mr. Thayer's early religious struggles led him to provoke controversies and to create hostility instead of to stimulate calm and peace. On the other hand, he unquestionably aroused a spirit of inquiry among the better informed. Even his enemies were obliged to respect his sincerity. He possessed a deep feeling that his chief duty lay in writing or preaching in defense of religion. One who signed himself "a Protestant" has said in Thayer's defense:

. . . I shall not take up the public's time in pointing out the unintelligibility of the writer's phraseology. . . . How far Mr. Thayer has hitherto shown himself to be "void of thought and judgment," the impartial public has decided: This priest ever acted with openness; from the very time of his return from Europe, he has been uniform in declaring his intention of laboring for the conversion of his countrymen, & what he thinks the *only* true faith; & every person who knows what advantages he quitted in Italy, France, and England . . . and his conduct here, must believe him sincere on his declaration.

Catholic priests were once accused of lurking in private and not daring, from a consciousness of weakness of their cause, to appear. If ever they did lurk, the true reason, as is now evident, was the rigor of the laws against them. When there is liberty of conscience none are bolder.¹¹²

Catholic writers, for the most part, have treated Thayer gently while agreeing that he was never a parish priest by "vocation, temperament, training or habit."¹¹³ His character with its idiosyncrasies and eccentricities did not harmonize with those of other men. A Catholic historian of the diocese of Boston declared, "Not a little of the uncompromising Puritan spirit clung to Thayer to the end, and he rode his creed like a hobby horse into every camp

¹¹² John Thayer, *Controversy*, 146-147.

¹¹³ Clarke, "Pioneer Convert," *op. cit.*, 161.

pell-mell with the natural effect of disorder and resentment."¹¹⁴ The following lines probably best summarize the contribution of Thayer to Catholicism:

The great good which he did must not be overlooked. He opened what was really a new issue among men of his kind. The Puritans saw, for the first time, one made in their own mold, speaking with their accent and thinking according to their cast, go out from among them with perfect sincerity and range himself under the banner that attached only contempt to its supporters. He brought the Church home to their firesides. It was no longer a thing for Frenchmen and Irishmen now, and many New Englanders, laymen and ministers in the century since, have entered through the breach which John Thayer opened with his brave, blundering hands.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Byrne, *op. cit.*, I, 121.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER VII

ELIZABETH ANN BAYLEY SETON AND HER CONTEMPORARIES

During a meeting of the bishops held at Mount Saint Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Maryland, on May 30, 1852, Archbishop Patrick Kenrick of Baltimore called Robert Seton, a student at the college, and introduced him with this remark: "Ladies and gentlemen, this boy's grandmother, Elizabeth Seton, did more for the Church in America than all of us bishops together."¹ This encomium might at first appear an exaggeration, but its true import is realized when the influence of Mother Seton is studied.

Born in New York City, August 28, 1774, Elizabeth Ann Bayley became heir to the prerogatives of the aristocratic circle in which her family moved. She was the second daughter of Dr. Richard Bayley and Catharine Charlton, whose father, Richard Charlton, was rector of Saint Andrew's Episcopal church on Staten Island.² Dr. Bayley had studied under Dr. John Charlton, his wife's brother. Before his marriage Bayley had worked abroad under the famous anatomist, William Hunter, and he revisited England, in the fall of 1775, in order to avail himself of Hunter's aid. He returned in the spring of 1776 with the commission of Surgeon-General in the English army under the command of General William Howe.³

At this time the cities of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston constituted the three social centers of the northern states. Like the other provinces of the union, New York was in the hands of contending forces, each seeking control.⁴ There was the DeLancy

¹ Robert Seton, *Memories of Many Years* (1923), 60. Robert Seton, grandson of Mother Seton, later became Archbishop of the titular see of Heliopolis.—Joseph B. Code, "Robert Seton," *D. A. B.* (1935), XVI, 597-598.

² Morgan Dix, ed., *A History of the Parish of Trinity Church in the City of New York* (1898), I, 243-244.

³ James Thacher, *American Medical Biography* (1828), I, 157, 161.

⁴ Wilbur C. Abbott, *New York in the American Revolution* (1936), 2-3, 29-30.

group aligned against the Livingston group, Episcopalianism against Congregationalism, and the landed aristocrat against the city merchant.⁵ After the Declaration of Independence, came the Loyalist and Revolutionary parties.

New York City with its environs was largely Tory in sympathy because of its imperial interests. Accordingly, Lord Howe after the battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776, entered the city and set up his headquarters. He dispatched Sir Henry Clinton with six thousand troops to Newport, Rhode Island. Dr. Richard Bayley was also sent there, but prompted by anxiety for his wife's health, he resigned his commission in order that he might return to New York. A few days after his arrival Mrs. Bayley died on giving birth to a third baby girl.⁶ The following year, June 16, 1778, Bayley brought home his second wife, Charlotte Barclay, daughter of Andrew Barclay and Helen Roosevelt,⁷ members of two of New York's best-known families and staunch communicants in the Church of England.⁸

This was the environment in which Elizabeth Bayley and her elder sister, Mary, were reared,⁹ along with their little half sisters and brothers.¹⁰ There was little opportunity for girls to receive an education in America, though in some of the central states there was a more equitable treatment granted than in New Eng-

⁵ *Ibid.*, 156-157; Van Tyne, *op. cit.*, 109-115; Carl Becker, *History of Political Parties in New York, 1760-1776* (1919), 274.

⁶ Robert Seton, *An Old Family, or the Setons of Scotland and America* (1899), 277; Lorenzo Sabine, *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists in the American Revolution* (1864), I, 218.

⁷ Burnham Moffat, *The Barclays of New York* (1904), 103-104, 112; Cornelia Barclay, *Our Branch of Barclays* (1915), 20.

⁸ Sprague, *op. cit.*, V, 91.

⁹ The baby, Catherine, died two years after her birth.

¹⁰ The children of Charlotte Barclay Bayley were: 1. Catherine Amelia (This must be "Emma," who married William Craig, and of whom Mother Seton spoke in her letters to Julia Scott. Cf. Joseph B. Code, ed., *Letters of Mother Seton to Mrs. Juliana Scott* (1935), 95, 205-206); 2. Richard; 3. Andrew Barclay; 4. Guy Carleton; 5. William Augustus; 6. Helen; 7. Mary Fitch.—Moffat, *op. cit.*, 125. Guy Carleton, born in 1786, married Grace Roosevelt on November 4, 1813; of their union was born James Roosevelt Bayley, first Bishop of Newark and eighth Archbishop of Baltimore.

land.¹¹ Parents of the upper classes in the Middle Atlantic and Southern States either employed governesses for their girls or sent their daughters to private schools conducted by relatives or acquaintances.¹² Bayley was anxious that his girls receive an education; so in addition to the three R's and the customary domestic training, Elizabeth also learned music and French. Her father seems to have taken a special interest in his "Betsy," doubtless because of her devotion to him and her resemblance to her dead mother. Bayley, though affected probably by the rationalism of the day, believed that a brilliant character is not always a solid character. He, therefore, sought to impress upon those under his care the necessity for self-restraint and reflection if they would develop strength and courage to meet the exigencies of life.¹³ From her childhood Elizabeth put these lessons into practice. To her stepmother, it would seem, she was indebted for her knowledge and love of the Bible.

If during the British occupation society life in New York was gay, with the presence of so many officers in their bright uniforms, there was also a gloomy side to the picture, since the city took on the character of a garrison town.¹⁴ There had been a succession of commanding generals: General Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, Sir Guy Carleton, arch-promoter of the Quebec Act of 1774 and friend of the Canadians. He arrived in May, 1782, and labored to adjust matters. Under trying circumstances he did much to mitigate the worst of the evils.¹⁵ Dr. Bayley became his friend,

¹¹ Thomas Woody, *History of Woman's Education in the United States* (1929), I, 177; cf. Edwin G. Dexter, *A History of Education in the United States* (1904), 429, who does not agree that New England was inferior to other sections in the education of women.

¹² In Catholic countries the education of girls was somewhat better provided for in convent schools. See Frederick Eby and C. F. Arrowood, *The Development of Modern Education* (1940), 358; Pierre J. Marique, *History of Christian Education* (1926), II, 244. In Maryland an occasional Catholic family sent the girls abroad to be educated. Some remained there and entered religious congregations.—Sister Agnes McCann, *Mother Seton's Daughters* (1917), I, xiv.

¹³ Charles I. White, *Life of Mrs. Eliza A. Seton* (1879), 16.

¹⁴ Abbott, *op. cit.*, 209-210, 348.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 265, 277.

and such was his admiration for Sir Guy that he named his third son after him.¹⁶

The last contingent of British troops left New York City on November 25, 1783. As the former Loyalists who remained in New York and its adjacent territory were in a decided majority, hostile feeling was not sufficiently strong to mark them for revenge. Consequently, those Loyalists who were willing to accept the new order and to remain quiet were not molested by the Continental Congress.¹⁷ Besides, it must be remembered that even those "old" families who had joined the patriotic party abandoned none of their conservative principles. "They had fought for independence from Great Britain, not independence from government and social restraint, and consequently they expected the wheel of democracy to stand still in 1783."¹⁸ Their interest became identified with the Federalist party, which in time was challenged and reduced by the rise of Jeffersonian democracy.¹⁹

The Bayley girls were taking their places in society during the first years of the young republic. With family prestige added to grace and charm, they became favorites at once. In 1789 Mary married Dr. Wright Post, her father's assistant. Five years later, on January 25, 1794, Bishop Samuel Provoost united Elizabeth in marriage to William McGee Seton, whose family traced their lineage to the earliest days of the feudal hierarchy in Scotland.²⁰ William's father had been the last notary public under the royal government,²¹ but like Dr. Bayley was not molested after the war; he had never made himself odious by a fanatical loyalty to England. After the Revolution the elder Seton was among the number who found a profitable living in an overseas trade. In collabora-

¹⁶ Probably Bayley re-entered the British service around 1782. Archbishop Seton in his *An Old Family*, 184, was, however, in error when he said Dr. Bayley "began life as staff-surgeon to General Sir Guy Carleton," for he had been Surgeon-General from 1776 to 1778.

¹⁷ Alexander C. Flick, *Loyalism in New York during the American Revolution* (1901), 165-166.

¹⁸ Samuel E. Morison, *Life and Letters of Harrison Gray Otis* (1913), I, 49.

¹⁹ Dixon Ryan Fox, *The Decline of Aristocracy in the Politics of New York* (1919), 14.

²⁰ Robert Seton, *An Old Family*, 1-6.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 262.

tion with Maitland in England there was established the house of Seton, Maitland, and Company, whose business extended to European cities and to the West Indies.²²

There was a large family of Setons. The father was twice married. The harmony that existed among all the members was notable, and the Seton home was the scene of many a social gathering. Elizabeth's husband, William, the eldest son, had been sent at the age of ten to England for his education. He spent several years at a private school and at sixteen made the "grand tour." He also spent some time with the Filicchi brothers who owned a well-known mercantile firm of Leghorn, Italy.²³ On his return home he entered his father's business and became engaged to Elizabeth Bayley.

James, the second son, was sent abroad in 1782 to prepare for a commission in the English army. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, but later resigned from the British service and became a citizen of the United States.²⁴ The third son, John, married a Miss Wise and lived at Summerhill, near Alexandria, Virginia. He joined the United States navy.²⁵

Anna Mary was a leader in social life when New York was the seat of Congress and gay with the first administration of Washington. She had married on November 24, 1790, Honorable John Middleton Vining, sole United States representative from Delaware and later United States senator. Vining had also served in the Congress of the Confederation from 1785 to 1789, when that body functioned in New York.²⁶

Three daughters of the second marriage, Rebecca, Cecilia, and Henrietta—better known as Harriet—were all to be closely associated with Elizabeth, for on the death of Mr. Seton, June 9, 1798, it devolved on Elizabeth's husband, as head of the Seton house, to provide for his half brothers and sisters until they became of age. Two of the girls were married: Charlotte to Gouven-

²² *Ibid.*, 262-263.

²³ *Ibid.*, 273.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 295-297. He had married in 1792 Mary Hoffman of New York.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 267.

²⁶ *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927* (1928), 1651; *Appleton's Cyclopædia*, VI (1889), 301.

eur Ogden and Elizabeth to James Maitland. There were also two younger half brothers, Samuel and Edward Augustus, who were sent to Connecticut to school.²⁷ Elizabeth at this time had two children of her own, Anna Maria and William.

Social life seems never to have engrossed Elizabeth's thoughts. From childhood her religious tendencies were clearly manifested, and she showed an unusual love for the poor and afflicted. She had a living example of charity in her father, who spent his days in an endeavor to relieve suffering humanity. Because of his outstanding work in anatomical and pathological research, Columbia College in 1792 established a chair of medicine to which Dr. Bayley was elected professor of anatomy; his son-in-law, Dr. Wright Post, became professor of surgery. As the latter wished to go abroad for further study, Bayley held both chairs until Post's return in 1793.²⁸

The yellow fever epidemic that broke out in New York City in 1795 found Bayley devoting his efforts to combating the disease. In his account of the epidemic he quotes an extract from the Reverend William O'Brien, O.P., relative to the terrible conditions among the Irish immigrants, who were then coming in numbers to this country. They lacked the necessities of life, and some were living in subterranean apartments that admitted no light except from hatch doors. There was not so much as a bed or a stool in the room. Father O'Brien was kept so busy performing his ministry among them that for two months he did not spend a whole night in bed.²⁹

These stories touched the heart of Elizabeth Seton, and in November, 1797, with a few other prominent ladies she organized the Society of Poor Widows with Small Children.³⁰ In 1798

²⁷ For brief sketch of each of the children by the second marriage see Robert Seton, *An Old Family*, 298-311. Cf. J. Hall Pleasants, *The Curzon Family of New York and Baltimore and Their English Descent* (1919), 46-48.

²⁸ Thacher, *op. cit.*, 163. In 1788, because of his advanced work in surgery, Dr. Bayley's office had been rifled by a deluded mob, who also destroyed his instruments and collections.—*Ibid.*

²⁹ Richard Bayley, *An Account of the Epidemic Fever . . .* (1796), 89-91.

³⁰ Robert Seton, *An Old Family*, 290; Joseph B. Code, "Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton," *D. A. B.* (1935), XVI, 596.

the city was visited with another epidemic of yellow fever. During this time also Dr. Bayley labored day and night, attending the sick and dying.³¹ Though Elizabeth's home duties were increasing,³² she continued her charitable work, in which she was aided by Rebecca Seton, the "sister of her soul," as she came to call her. As the two went on their errands of mercy, they were known as the Protestant Sisters of Charity. Even when Elizabeth was reduced to poverty and harassed with difficulties, she wrote to her girlhood friend, Julia (Sitgreaves) Scott, February, 1802, to return "a thousand thanks for your remembrance of my poor widows."³³

The death of the elder Seton was followed by serious reversal in the family fortune. The French Revolution had caused a general business upheaval, and William McGee Seton was one of the first to suffer from the crisis. Toward the end of 1799 the failure of the Seton firm in London affected the New York branch. Mr. Seton soon found himself in difficulties which he was not able to surmount.³⁴ As Elizabeth found an outlet to her feelings through writing, much of the family history is revealed in her letters, which manifest a spirit of Christian fortitude.³⁵ She endeavored to distract her husband's thoughts and raise his spirits in every possible way. She was his scribe in writing and copying letters and also aided him in arranging his papers.³⁶ Both were harassed in the succeeding months with the thought of bankruptcy and the anticipation of losing all their possessions. On June 28, 1800, Elizabeth gave birth to her fourth child, whom she named Catherine Josephine after her maternal grandmother.

³¹ Code, *Letters*, 43, 45.

³² Elizabeth had given birth to a third child, June 20, 1798, whom she named Richard after her father.

³³ Code, *Letters*, 154. Julia Sitgreaves Scott was at that time a young widow with two children, living at Easton, near Philadelphia.—*Ibid.*

³⁴ Robert Seton, *Memoir, Letters and Journal of Elizabeth Seton* (1869), I, 59-60; Code, *Letters*, 102-103. The immediate cause of the failure was the loss, off the island of Texel, of a ship which was carrying a large amount of specie from Amsterdam to England to relieve the distress in that quarter.—Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 59, Note.

³⁵ While on a visit to her father's home on Long Island in the summer of 1799, Elizabeth had become enamored with Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Emile*, but such reading soon lost its fascination for her.—*Ibid.*, I, 50-51.

³⁶ Code, *Letters*, 31, 106.

As their country home was now sold, Elizabeth spent the summer months recuperating at her father's cottage on Staten Island.³⁷

It was at the beginning of this period of distress that the Reverend Henry Hobart came into her life. In the fall of 1800 he had accepted an invitation to become assistant minister at Trinity Episcopal Church. His charming manner, keen intellect, and warm heart drew men to respect and reverence him. Eager to see his Church recognized and acknowledged, he set to work as its champion and defender. He preached with eloquence and zeal.³⁸ Elizabeth and Rebecca came under the spell of his magnetism. He in turn became sincerely attached to them and his visits to the Seton home became for Elizabeth a solace in her adversity.

If the transcending of sorrow and vexation is the mark of a strong soul, then Elizabeth Bayley Seton was such a person, for beginning with the death of her father-in-law, she was to experience one trial after another. She was devoted to Mr. Seton and sorrowed when he died, but she experienced indescribable anguish at the death of her own father to whom she was passionately attached. The terrible yellow fever epidemic again made its appearance in the summer of 1801. Elizabeth was at her father's home on Staten Island where, witnessing the landing of the poor immigrants, she was greatly impressed by the piety of the Irish as they assembled and knelt in prayer each morning.³⁹ When the plague broke out, Elizabeth would gladly have associated herself with those caring for the sick, but her father deterred her because of her obligations to her own family.⁴⁰ He himself fell a victim to duty and died on August 17, 1801.⁴¹ The fact

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 110-11.

³⁸ Dix, *op. cit.*, II, 207-208.

³⁹ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 74.

⁴⁰ Joseph B. Code, ed., *Elizabeth Seton* by Madame de Barberey (1927), 34-35.

⁴¹ Elizabeth's father had been appointed health physician of the port of New York about 1795. He had succeeded in having state quarantine laws passed and in 1799 had obtained from Governor Jay and the assemblymen at Albany a commission to build a lazaretto to prevent the spreading of disease by those entering the United States.—Thacher, *op. cit.*, 166; Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 47; Code, *Letters*, 71, 75. One day in August he entered a room into which contrary to his orders, the sick with their belongings had been crowded. He felt himself at once stricken with the disease.—Thacher, *op. cit.*, 166.

that he died with the name of Jesus on his lips⁴² was for her a source of great consolation and aroused in her a keener religious consciousness.

Darker days were in store for Elizabeth. Because of financial straits, she had to economize in many ways. Lacking the funds to pay for their education, she taught her three older children and Cecilia.⁴³ To this labor was added the care of the infant of Elizabeth Maitland, her sister-in-law, whose illness made it impossible for her to care for her child. Furthermore, Rebecca, who must have been very helpful to the Seton household, had to be sent to take charge of her older sister's children; the task of providing for the Maitland family devolved upon Mr. Seton.⁴⁴

At the same time Elizabeth's own little group were experiencing the sicknesses common to a family of growing children; in addition "Mammy Huber," the faithful household servant, fell mortally ill.⁴⁵ Because of her remarkable endurance at this trying time, Mr. Seton called his wife "the old knot of oak";⁴⁶ but he, never very strong, broke under the strain, and his physician advising a trip to a warmer climate, he decided to revisit his old friends, the Filicchi, of Leghorn, Italy. Elizabeth made preparations to accompany her husband. She broke up housekeeping and weaned her sick baby, Rebecca.⁴⁷ It was decided that Anna Maria should accompany her parents. The other four children were entrusted to the care of Rebecca, the supervision of the business to Mr. James Seton.

In the month of October, 1803, the three Setons took passage on the American brig, the *Shepherdess*, bound for Italy.⁴⁸ The account of the journey is too well-known to need repeating except briefly. When their ship entered the harbor of Leghorn on November 18, it was found that Captain O'Brien had sailed without

⁴² Code, *Letters*, 138-143.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 128-129.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 146, 153.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁴⁶ Code, *Letters*, 130.

⁴⁷ Rebecca, who was born July 20, 1802, had been named for her aunt, Rebecca Seton. For sketch of the Seton children see Robert Seton, *An Old Family*, 218-333.

⁴⁸ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 96; Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 41.

a bill of health. Since they had come from New York, the health authorities feared that Mr. Seton might have yellow fever; consequently, in spite of the protests of the Filicchi brothers, the Setons were ordered to the lazaretto. The resulting prohibition of the welcome which Elizabeth had expected from her half brother, Guy Carleton Bayley, who was then making his apprenticeship in the counting house of the Filicchi, helped to make her grief more poignant. The tragic events that occurred during those days while they were detained within the quarantine hospital were recorded by Elizabeth in the journal which she wrote for Rebecca. In it she revealed her heroism, her constancy, and her tenderness, as she poured forth her sentiments and emotions.⁴⁹

The Filicchi did everything within their power to ease the bitterness of the distressing situation. They sent a faithful servant to wait upon their friends during the time of imprisonment, and upon the release of the Setons, on December 19, sent them to Pisa where it was warmer. During these years of trial, and especially during these latter days, Elizabeth had taught her husband to have faith and hope in the Savior. He died a Christian death, resigned to the will of God, on December 27. The body was taken to Leghorn where it was interred in the Protestant cemetery.⁵⁰ Elizabeth and Annina, as the child was called by the Italians, were received as members of the family by the Filicchi, who treated them with great kindness.

It was while living in this Catholic house that Elizabeth came first to know the tenets of the Church. The Filicchi gave her an example of practical Catholicity, for their lives were consistent with the religious truths which they professed. She was moved also by the Church's ritual, and she longed to possess the faith

⁴⁹ *Memoirs of Mrs. S. . . . Written by Herself* (1817), *passim*. Mr. Hobart is supposed to have borrowed these letters from Mrs. Seton, to have made a copy of them, and to have had them published, much to Mother Seton's displeasure. Cf. Joseph M. Finotti, *Bibliographia Catholica Americana* (1872), 236.

⁵⁰ Archbishop Seton records a visit to the grave thus:

" . . . I took a steamer to Leghorn. I ran up to Pisa, and saw the Filicchis, then back the next day and visited my grandfather's grave in the Protestant cemetery; leaving one hundred dollars to have it bettered."—Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 130-131.

of the Italians and their nearness to the Savior through the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The Filicchi in turn were impressed by Elizabeth's fortitude and religious spirit,⁵¹ and they sought every opportunity to enlighten her. They placed several doctrinal books in her hands and introduced her to Abbé Plunkett, a learned Irish priest at Leghorn, who took a lively interest in her welfare.⁵²

Elizabeth and her daughter embarked for New York on February 3, 1804. The vessel was forced back by a driving storm, and Anna Maria contracted scarlet fever. When her child had almost recovered, Mrs. Seton was seized with the same disease; so the voyage had to be postponed again, until April 8.⁵³ This time Antonio Filicchi, who had business interests in America, offered to accompany them, as otherwise, they would be alone on the ship with a captain who was a stranger. His brother, Filippo, had made several visits to the United States, where he made contacts with the leading men of the day. Washington had appointed him consul-general of the United States at Leghorn because of his knowledge of the political conditions, resources, and trade interests of the young republic.⁵⁴ He had also become acquainted with Bishop Carroll, and he gave Elizabeth a letter of introduction to that prelate.⁵⁵

During the trip, which lasted nearly two months, Elizabeth not only read the books which her friends had given her, but discussed with Filicchi the doctrines of the Catholic Church. By the time she had reached New York she was virtually a convert to Catholicism. On her arrival, June 2, she found her beloved Rebecca Seton dying of pulmonary trouble. Her death on July 8 deprived Elizabeth of her greatest support, for she felt that Rebecca would have sustained her in her resolution to embrace the Catholic faith.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Elizabeth's patient endurance of suffering had drawn to her all hearts; and she once overheard the remark, "If she were not a heretic she would be a saint!"—*Ibid.*, I, 135.

⁵² White, *op. cit.*, 92-93. Cf. Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 135, 151.

⁵³ White, *op. cit.*, 94, 100.

⁵⁴ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 107; Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 77. Filippo had married a Miss Cowper of Boston in 1792.

⁵⁵ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 103.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 99-102.

After Antonio Filicchi had seen Elizabeth restored to her family, he left New York to attend to the Filicchi business elsewhere. At the time of his departure Elizabeth assured him that she would write Bishop Carroll concerning her entrance into the Catholic Church. However, Filicchi had advised her that as a matter of courtesy she should disclose her intention to the Reverend Henry Hobart. The fear of offending Hobart and losing his friendship had caused Elizabeth while still on the ocean to write these lines to him:

As I approach you I tremble, and while the dashing of the waves and their incessant motion, picture to me the allotment which God has given me, the tears fall fast through my fingers at the unsupportable thought of being separated from you . . . you will not be severe; you will respect my sincerity, and though you will think me in error and even reprehensible, in changing my religion, I know that heavenly Christian Charity will plead for me in your affections.

. . . if your dear friendship and esteem must be the price of my fidelity to what I believe to be the truth, I cannot doubt the mercy of God who will certainly draw me nearer to Himself, and this I confidently feel from the experience of the past and the truth of His promises which can never fail.⁵⁷

The talented minister at Trinity Church at once sought means to dissuade her from taking such a step. Apart from his esteem for Elizabeth Seton, the Reverend Mr. Hobart feared the result of her example on others.⁵⁸ He not only asked her to study more fully the teachings of the Episcopal Church, but also brought books

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 106; Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 187.

⁵⁸ John McVicar, *The Early Life and Professional Years of Bishop Hobart* (1838), 267. Elizabeth had been godmother to his first baby girl whom he named Rebecca. It was this daughter who in 1825 married Levi Silliman Ives, one time Anglican bishop of North Carolina. After his entrance into the Catholic Church, his wife also embraced the tenets of that religion. For the story of his conversion see Levi S. Ives, *The Trials of a Mind in Its Progress to Catholicism* (1855), and for his life see John O'Grady, *Levi Silliman Ives, Pioneer Leader of Catholic Charities* (1933), and sketch by Richard J. Purcell in *D. A. B.*, IX, 521.

for her to read which disparaged the teachings of the Catholic Church. Under his influence and that of her relatives and friends Mrs. Seton became perplexed as to the course to pursue. Sometime in July she addressed herself to Bishop Carroll:

. . . In the decided testimonies that are given me by the clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church, that they are a true Church, I acknowledge that the foundation of my Catholic principles is destroyed, and I cannot see the necessity of making a change. It is necessary to inform you that I have felt my situation in the most awful manner, and, as the mother and sole parent of five children, have certainly pleaded with God earnestly, and, I may strictly say, incessantly, as it has been the only and supreme desire of my soul to know the truth. . . .⁵⁹

Instead of mailing her letter to Bishop Carroll, Elizabeth showed it to Mr. Hobart, who advised her not to send it. In her distress of mind she enclosed the letter to Antonio Filicchi, who was at Boston, leaving him to dispose of it as he thought best. He at once forwarded it to Bishop Carroll with an explanation as to the character and disposition of Elizabeth.⁶⁰

There being absolutely nothing left of her husband's fortune, Elizabeth found herself dependent for support upon her family. She had aroused a storm of opposition when they heard that she intended to become a Catholic. To be poor was bad enough, but to become a despised "papist" was out of the question. St. Peter's, the Catholic Church on Barclay Street, had few parishioners "of consequence" and, because of former trustee trouble, the Catholic faith was not represented under very favorable auspices. The congregation consisted for the most part of poor Irish who were generally regarded as the offscouring of humanity. Did Elizabeth wish to bring upon her family and her children moral and social degradation?

On the other hand, there were Protestant friends who came to aid her financially. Mr. John Wilkes⁶¹ and Mrs. Startin, her

⁵⁹ White, *op. cit.*, 112; Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 112.

⁶⁰ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 113.

⁶¹ Charles and John Wilkes came to New York in 1780 with letters of introduction to Mr. Seton and remained there permanently.—Robert Seton, *An Old Family*, 260.

godmother, as well as her brother-in-law, Dr. Post, pledged themselves to provide for her maintenance during the first year, after which she hoped to find means to support herself.⁶² They obtained for her a little house about half a mile from town,⁶³ and here Mrs. Scott came from Philadelphia to visit her in order to offer assistance.⁶⁴

It is evident from Elizabeth's letters to the Filicchi in Italy, as well as those addressed to Antonio, who remained in America for two years attending to business, that Mrs. Seton was passing through a distressing state of uncertainty. Antonio had returned to New York in August, and on the twenty-second of the month had received an answer to Mrs. Seton's letter to Bishop Carroll. This he immediately dispatched to her. Although Bishop Carroll gave her counsel and encouragement, she could make no immediate decision respecting her future religious affiliation.⁶⁵ After Antonio's departure Mr. Hobart called upon her, but he was "entirely out of all patience," and the interview was "short and painful on both sides."⁶⁶

From Mrs. Seton's letters to the Filicchi and others, it is evident that she was enduring a terrible mental strain.⁶⁷ On November 20, 1804, she wrote to a friend in Paris:

... If Mr. Wilkes had not taken so much interest in my situation, I would have left the country almost immediately on my return, on account of the coldness with which I was treated by my friends when my Catholic sentiments became known. . . .⁶⁸

⁶² Code, *Letters*, 179-180. Julia Scott wished to adopt Anna Maria to lighten Elizabeth's burden, but Mrs. Seton would never consent to be parted from her children.—*Ibid.*, 186.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 180.

⁶⁴ White, *op. cit.*, 120.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 119.

⁶⁷ On September 2, Elizabeth related a conversation she had with her brother-in-law, Dr. Post. He admitted that, if before God she believed the doctrine of the Catholic Church to be true, "the errors or imperfections of its members could not justify a separation from its communion."—*Ibid.*, 118-119.

⁶⁸ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 202. Mr. Antonio Filicchi in a letter written to Elizabeth from Boston contrasts the tolerance of Boston at that time as compared with the intolerance of New York. He wrote, October 8, 1804:

... Oh! my good friend, with what worthy clergymen are the Catholics

So crucified was her soul in the conflict that she cried out in anguish: "It will end by destroying my life if protracted much longer."⁶⁹ Finally she resolved that she would desist from going to church and would embrace no form of Christianity until her death.⁷⁰

On January 6, the feast of the Epiphany and a day which the Episcopal Church was wont to celebrate with great solemnity, she remained at home, hopeless and forlorn except for her children who were always her delight and joy. To relieve her state of mind, she commenced to read the sermon of Bourdaloue for the day. It was on the star that guided the Wise Men to Bethlehem, and it recommended that those who had not light enough to eliminate their doubts, should seek guidance from those in the Catholic Church who were authorized to direct them as intermediaries between God and man.⁷¹ At once she resolved to consult a Catholic priest. Several times she endeavored to see the Reverend Father Matthew O'Brien,⁷² but was disappointed; whereupon she wrote to Bishop Carroll.⁷³ She also entered into correspondence with the Reverend Mr. Cheverus of Boston, who graciously assisted her. The latter put her in communication with the Abbé Tisserant,⁷⁴ a friend laboring at Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Mrs. Seton began to attend the Catholic Church, and

here blessed! Their conduct and learning are acknowledged almost with enthusiasm by the Protestants themselves. Every Sunday our Church is crowded by them to hear the sermon of our learned and eloquent Cheverus; and some conversions from time to time take place without any murmuring at all. There is here a very good young Miss, first daughter of Mrs. Stoughton, who is one of the converts. . . .—*Ibid.*, 201.

⁶⁹ Joseph B. Code, *Great American Foundresses* (1929), 86.

⁷⁰ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 132.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 133-134.

⁷² John M. Farley, *History of St. Patrick's Cathedral* (1908), 44. In 1803 William O'Brien, O.P., who had rendered heroic service to the victims of the yellow fever, was breaking down under his arduous labors; his brother Matthew was sent to assist him and remained at St. Peter's until 1807. See sketch of Matthew O'Brien by Richard J. Purcell, *D. A. B.*, XIII, 610.

⁷³ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 209, 210.

⁷⁴ One of the French emigrant clergy recently arrived in the United States. Because of ill health he returned to France within a few years.—White, *op. cit.*, 158.

on March 14 she was received into that communion by the Reverend Matthew O'Brien in the presence of Antonio Filicchi.⁷⁵

The entrance of Mrs. Seton into the Catholic fold brought her peace of soul, but her temporal difficulties appeared insuperable. James Seton and Charlotte (Seton) Ogden were her worst adversaries. Mrs. Startin, Elizabeth's godmother, was very wealthy and much attached to her. As she had no children of her own, it was commonly supposed that she would leave some portion of her fortune to her young friend, but she cut her off when she became a Catholic.⁷⁶ Mr. Wilkes had suggested before Elizabeth's affiliation with the Roman Catholic denomination that she should receive as boarders some of the children attending St. Mark's Episcopal Church School,⁷⁷ but Elizabeth preferred to open a little school of her own. The plan failed because it was regarded by the Protestants as a proselytizing scheme.⁷⁸

The two Filicchi never ceased to assist her,⁷⁹ but Mrs. Seton wished to rely upon herself as much as possible. Her letter of March 5, 1805, to Mrs. Scott indicates her distraught state of mind:

I could go almost mad at the view of the conduct of every friend I have here except yourself. It would really seem that in their estimation I am a child not to be trusted with its daily bread lest it should waste it. But never mind, all will come right one of these days; and you know penance is the purifier of the soul. Therefore, I drive every thought away and meet it with the smile of content, which, however, often conceals the sharp thorn in the heart—a thorn I can give you no name for.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 141.

⁷⁶ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 202. Mrs. Startin did, however, give Elizabeth money during the first years; she always required a receipt.—Code, *Letters*, 235.

⁷⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, 185, 192, 210.

⁷⁸ Letter of Elizabeth Seton to Antonio Filicchi, May, 1805, in Archives of St. Joseph College, Emmitsburg, Md. Cf. Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 147.

⁷⁹ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 220.

⁸⁰ Code, *Letters*, 192. Mr. Filicchi at this time was probably suggesting that she return to Italy or go to Canada for in the same letter she wrote:

"I have run the gauntlet and have persuaded Filicchi that this is not the time for entering into his fascinating schemes, though I do not see my duty to my dear ones in a clear view in either way."—*Ibid.*, 185.

In the spring of the same year Mrs. Sadlier and Mrs. Duplex, two of her old friends, obtained for Elizabeth a position as assistant teacher to a Mr. and Mrs. White who had recently arrived from England. When it was discovered though, that the Whites were Catholics, the number of pupils enrolled no longer warranted the further employment of Elizabeth.⁸¹

During July Elizabeth was called upon to nurse her half sister, Mrs. Emma (Bayley) Craig,⁸² who died after giving birth to a baby boy. Elizabeth's stepmother also died shortly after her daughter, and again Elizabeth was in attendance. She had the consolation of receiving from Mrs. Bayley before her death every mark of reconciliation.⁸³ The strain under which she had lived since her return from Italy had so lessened her strength that Dr. Post took her and her children to his country home where she was nursed back to health.⁸⁴

Although Elizabeth was again in the midst of munificence, her energy of character did not permit her to depend entirely upon the generosity of others. She, therefore, joyfully embraced Mr. Wilkes' proposal that she should accept as boarders the pupils of St. Mark's school.⁸⁵ Mr. Harris, the principal of the school, would not admit her as an associate teacher, but he entered into an arrangement whereby she might board twelve to fourteen boys. A house was rented, and Elizabeth entered upon her new task, happy in the thought she was doing her part to support her children.⁸⁶ This plan proved successful for only a short time, and she was again dependent upon the charity of others.

Mrs. Seton was particularly anxious that her "darlings," as she called them, should receive an education. Mrs. Scott sent her money that she might hire a woman to help her with the domestic work in order to afford her time to devote to her chil-

⁸¹ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 225-226. The White school existed scarcely three months.—Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 151-154, 160.

⁸² Moffat, *op. cit.*, 125.

⁸³ Code, *Letters*, 205-206.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 210. [Correction: "Mr. White," page 210, should be "Mr. Wilkes."]

⁸⁶ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 162-164, and Code, *Letters*, 210, 215. See also White, *op. cit.*, 160.

dren. Mrs. Scott was to the children a fairy godmother, and they affectionately called her "Aunt Scott."⁸⁷ Mr. Filicchi vied with Mrs. Scott in endeavoring to provide for the welfare of Mrs. Seton and her children.⁸⁸ While on business in Canada, he sought to enter her two sons in a school in Montreal.⁸⁹ This plan did not materialize, but he gained admission for them to the college of Georgetown in the District of Columbia. Mrs. Seton, overjoyed, communicated the news to her "darling, dear Julia," on May 12, 1806:

My heart is almost too happy to write you. My darling boys are on their way to Georgetown College with Mr. James Barry of Washington city and may stay a few days in Philadelphia. . . . You kiss my boys one hundred times for me.⁹⁰

Harriet and Cecilia, the two younger Seton girls, were devotedly attached to their sister-in-law, but after Mrs. Seton's conversion, they were forbidden to see Elizabeth. When, however, Cecilia became dangerously ill in January, 1806, her family heeded her plea to send for Elizabeth.⁹¹ Cecilia was only fifteen, but she wished to become a Catholic. On her recovery she carried out her desire and was admitted into the Catholic Church on June 20, 1806, by the distinguished Augustinian, Father Michael Hurley, who had recently arrived from Europe and was stationed

⁸⁷ Code, *Letters*, *passim*. Mrs. Seton writing to Mrs. Scott on May 6, 1805, added the following postscript:

"My darlings are quite well. Anna always speaks of you sweetly, affectionately, 'My aunt Scott.' Kate says 'She is mine, too.' Rebecca is a cherub. But my saucy boys almost master me."—*Ibid.*, 200.

⁸⁸ He took upon himself the expense of the boys' education and promised them positions in his firm in Italy.—Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 239. A yearly sum was also to be given her by his agents in New York.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 230-31.

⁹⁰ Code, *Letters*, 220. Though Mr. Filicchi had preferred Montreal for her boys, Mrs. Seton wished to keep them within the United States.—Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 230-231.

⁹¹ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 168. When Mrs. Seton had sailed for Europe with her sick husband, Rebecca, Cecilia, and Mrs. Seton's children went to live with Mr. James Seton, but Harriet was taken by Mrs. Charlotte Ogden.—Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 99.

at St. Peter's Church in New York. Cecilia was at the time living with her sister, Charlotte Ogden, but when conditions became unbearable, she wrote these lines:

My dear Charlotte,—In consequence of a firm resolution to adhere to the Catholic faith, I left your house this morning, and can only repeat that if, in the exercise of my Faith my family will receive me, my wish is to return and give them every proof of my affection, redoubled care to please them, and submission to their wishes in every point consistent with my duty to Him who claims my first obedience. Under these circumstances whatever is the Providence of Almighty God for me, I must receive with entire resignation and confidence in His protection.

Forever your affectionate sister,
Cecilia⁹²

Cecilia made her way to the home of Elizabeth, who received her gladly, though she thereby brought upon herself renewed persecution. The "siren voice" of Mrs. Seton was blamed for the conversion of the young girl. Many who hitherto had kept up some semblance of courtesy now forbade their children to hold intercourse with her. The difficulties that Elizabeth Seton was experiencing may be seen from a letter she wrote on August 10, 1806, to Mr. Antonio Filicchi who was voyaging home to Italy:

I have been in a sea of trouble since you left me; but the guiding star is, always bright, and the Master of the storm always in view. The anger and violence of the Setons, Tarquars, Wilkes, etc., when they found out Cecilia was not only a Catholic but as firm as the rock she builds on, cannot be described. They threatened that she should be sent from the country, I should be turned out as a beggar with my children, and many other nonsenses (as you call them) not worth naming. They have assembled a family meeting and resolved if she

⁹² Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 170-171. Cf. "Letters of Mrs. Ogden to Cecilia" and of "Mrs. James Seton to Cecilia."—Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 255-256.

persevered that they would consider themselves individually bound never to speak to either of us again or suffer her to enter any of their houses.⁹³

When Mr. Filicchi received this letter in London, he directed his agent in New York:

... to furnish Mrs. Seton with whatever further sum she might at any time call for, to support herself and family. Perhaps she might resolve to seek for tranquillity or retirement with us, and we shall not be at a loss to find an asylum for them all at Gubbio, or somewhere else.⁹⁴

He also wrote to his "sister" as he called her, but sent it in care of Mr. James Barry, a Catholic gentleman, who had come to New York with his family.⁹⁵ The friendship of the Barrys was to prove valuable to Elizabeth. Theirs was the only home where she received a welcome⁹⁶ after the departure of Mrs. Sadlier and Mrs. Duplex for Ireland.⁹⁷ Dr. Post seems to have turned against her at this period, and her sister, Mrs. Post, and her daughter, Helen, as "votaries of fashion" and "very much in the public eye" were probably too busy to bother with her.⁹⁸

Mrs. Seton found a faithful friend in Father Hurley during his stay in New York, 1806-1807. He was, as she expressed it, "rigid and severe in a calm," but whenever she had any trouble, "most indulgent and compassionate."⁹⁹ She valued also the letters of advice and instruction she received from the Reverend

⁹³ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 174.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 176-177.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, 190; Code, *Letters*, 237-238. She was deprived of this companionship when Mr. James Barry died and Mrs. Barry and her daughter left New York.—Code, *Letters*, 249-250.

⁹⁷ Code, *Letters*, 237. Both were Protestants, but Mrs. Duplex was already inquiring into the doctrines of the Catholic Church, which she later embraced.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 233, 250.

⁹⁹ White, *op. cit.*, 192; Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 181. The Abbé Tisserant, whose advice and interest had guided Mrs. Seton, had departed for Europe in May, 1806.—White, *op. cit.*, 176; Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 249-250.

Dr. Cheverus, the clergyman and gentleman *par excellence*, and also the words of encouragement offered her by the Reverend Mr. Matignon of Boston. He had written to her after Cecilia's entrance into the Catholic Church: "Your perseverance and the help of grace will finish in you the work which God has commenced and will render you, I trust, the means of effecting the conversion of many others."¹⁰⁰ Unconsciously Elizabeth was becoming the champion of her new-found faith and she was paying the price in suffering and ignominy.

In the spring of 1807 Mrs. James Seton died; whereupon Cecilia was asked to return home and care for her brother's eight children.¹⁰¹ It meant sacrifice. In May of that year Bishop Carroll addressed Mrs. Seton in these words:

Though you are persecuted for obeying the dictates of your conscience, and are not allowed to speak with freedom to persons dear and closely allied to you, yet your example and patience, and I may add, joyful suffering, must produce, and have already worked their effect on the consciences of those who place a higher value on their salvation than all earthly things.¹⁰²

Elizabeth's financial position was causing her great anxiety. Because the number of her boarders had decreased, she rented a smaller house.¹⁰³ Probably one of her keenest sorrows was occasioned by the taunts which her three girls, especially Anna, had to endure from other children.¹⁰⁴ Under such circumstances Mrs. Seton thought seriously of moving to Canada where she might earn a livelihood teaching in some convent school and where her girls could receive the benefit of a Catholic education; but the Bishop of Baltimore and her two clerical friends in Boston disapproved of such a step.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ White, *op. cit.*, 188.

¹⁰¹ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 180, 184; Code, *Letters*, 236.

¹⁰² Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 183.

¹⁰³ Code, *Letters*, 247, 257.

¹⁰⁴ Mrs. Scott again offered to take Anna to Philadelphia with her, but the sympathetic understanding of the young girl for her mother would not permit such a separation.—*Ibid.*, 246-247.

¹⁰⁵ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 192.

Toward the end of August, 1807, the Reverend Mr. DuBourg, president of St. Mary's College in Baltimore, came to New York.¹⁰⁶ While saying Mass, he was particularly attracted by the appearance of a woman, obviously a widow, who approached the communion rail. A little later Mrs. Seton, for it was she, came to the rectory. Through Father Sibourd, the acting pastor, Elizabeth Seton and DuBourg met. He learned of her troubles and of her idea of leaving New York. At once DuBourg, as a man of vision and remarkable enterprise, conceived of a girls' school in Baltimore with Elizabeth Bayley Seton as instructress.

Bishop Carroll, Cheverus, and Matignon readily agreed to the plan, but it remained only in a state of desire. The following spring DuBourg was again in New York, and the question of a school was discussed. Finally he proposed a house might be rented until they should be in a position to erect a building on one of the vacant lots attached to St. Mary's.¹⁰⁷ He also suggested that Mrs. Seton's boys might attend St. Mary's College for a very small sum, an arrangement which would leave the Filicchi money for other necessities.¹⁰⁸

The new undertaking was approved by Elizabeth's Catholic friends. Mr. Filicchi authorized her "to draw on his correspondent in New York for any sum necessary to begin a useful establishment."¹⁰⁹ She waited, however, for the final decision of Dr. Post and Mr. Wilkes. Their answer was in the affirmative, and they advised that she should leave as soon as possible. She could rent a house near the college at Baltimore until it was time to open the school.¹¹⁰ Accordingly, on June 9, 1808, Elizabeth with her three girls set sail on one of the Baltimore packets. It would have been a pleasure to travel via Philadelphia to see her friend, Julia, but she did not wish to incur added expense.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ White, *op. cit.*, 199, places DuBourg's visit in the fall of 1806; Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 195, in August, 1807. The latter is probably correct, for both mention Sibourd as the one who introduced Mother Seton to DuBourg. Sibourd took charge of St. Peter's Church in 1807.

¹⁰⁷ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 207.

¹⁰⁸ Code, *Letters*, 258; Robert Seton, *Memoir*, II, 13-14.

¹⁰⁹ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, II, 15.

¹¹⁰ Code, *Letters*, 258, 262.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 263.

Mrs. Seton reached Baltimore on the eve of Corpus Christi, June 15. The next morning DuBourg sent for her, and an hour later she was witnessing the ceremony of the consecration of the newly erected chapel. After Mass she was welcomed by the Sulpicians and by Father DuBourg's stepmother, his sister, and his two little nieces, who had come to Baltimore from Jamaica. Elizabeth was among friends and found herself the recipient of the "little welcome attentions" of which she had so long been deprived.¹¹² When she withdrew her boys from Georgetown College and brought them to St. Mary's, even the low tuition promised by DuBourg was dispensed with. The families of Colonel John Howard and Robert Barry, consul for Portugal, were also "unceasing in their kindness."¹¹³ Moreover, the absence of sectarian prejudice in Maryland was very noticeable at this time,¹¹⁴ so Mrs. Seton felt "as if she had been born into a new existence."¹¹⁵

At once Elizabeth began to arrange the house which Father DuBourg had rented for her on Paca Street. She was the "rich possessor" of \$1,000, for she had saved \$600 from the amount which Julia Scott had sent her at different intervals; the remaining \$400 was the amount she received yearly from Mr. Filicchi's firm in New York.¹¹⁶ New paths were being charted for her. She would become, not only the foundress of the first native Sisterhood in the United States, but one of the creators of the parochial school system in the new republic and the arch-promoter of Catholic action for the period in which she lived. Her influence would radiate far and wide, and her example would become a beacon light to others.

The need for Catholic educational institutions in the United States was one of the great problems that confronted Bishop

¹¹² Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 210-212; Robert Seton, *Memoir*, II, 20-21. Cf. James J. Kortendick, "The History of St. Mary's College, Baltimore." Master's thesis, Catholic University (1942), 19-20.

¹¹³ Code, *Letters*, 266-269. Mr. Robert Barry and his wife were relatives of the Barrys who had befriended Mrs. Seton in New York.

¹¹⁴ Bernard Steiner, *History of Education in Maryland* (1894), 54.

¹¹⁵ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 213.

¹¹⁶ Code, *Letters*, 269.

Carroll when he assumed the episcopate. As the Constitution, through its First Amendment, caused indirectly the ultimate secularization of public education, individual liberty and local autonomy were to be safeguarded by the Tenth Amendment.¹¹⁷ The period after the Revolution witnessed great educational achievements, and the Catholic hierarchy soon came to recognize the need for proper schools if the Catholic youth of the country were to be safeguarded in their faith. Bishop Carroll in his first pastoral letter, in 1792, after the meeting of the Catholic clergy in the first synod at Baltimore in 1791, discussed the advantages of Catholic education and urged parents to support Georgetown College which had been founded for boys, 1789. He regretted that many would be deprived of its immediate advantages because of the necessary expense entailed for those attending.¹¹⁸

When Elizabeth Seton opened her school for girls in Baltimore in September, 1808, there were only two other places in the United States, Washington and New Orleans, where girls might receive a Catholic education. The Poor Clares, of France, as early as May, 1793, had opened a girls' academy in Baltimore, but their lack of familiarity with the English language and American customs and the insufficiency of tuition fees caused them to leave for Havana, Cuba, in the fall of that year. Theirs was, however, the first school conducted by a community of Sisters¹¹⁹ within the limits of the United States at that time. Later, in 1798, they returned to Baltimore and were invited by Father DuBourg, then president of Georgetown College, to open a school in Georgetown. This institution also failed, the rule of the Order being too austere for teaching Sisters, and on the death of their superior the Sisters returned to France in 1804.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Eby and Arrowood, *op. cit.*, 547-548.

¹¹⁸ Peter Guilday, *The National Pastorals of the American Hierarchy, 1792-1919* (1923), 3-4.

¹¹⁹ The Carmelites had established a monastery at Port Tobacco, Maryland, 1790, but they did not engage in educational activities until 1830. In 1850 they again adopted the contemplative plan of life.—Charles W. Currier, *Carmel in America* (1890), 70, 183-197.

¹²⁰ Sullivan, *op. cit.*, 7-119.

In 1799, at the request of the Reverend Leonard Neale,¹²¹ successor to DuBourg at Georgetown, Miss Alice Lalor and her companions, who had come from Ireland to Philadelphia in 1795, opened the first school in the District of Columbia to which pupils were admitted without tuition; seven poor children were educated gratuitously each year. The school was closed within a short time, however, because of yellow fever plague. It reopened as a female academy. The success of the school was slow, and it was not until 1816 that the Sisterhood received the papal indult establishing it as a Congregation of Visitandines.¹²²

After the purchase of Louisiana by the United States the Ursulines could claim the honor of being the first religious Order of women within the present limits of the United States. They had come to New Orleans in 1727, at the request of Bienville, the founder of the colony. They established the first educational institution for young women, the first free school, the first orphanage, and the first hospital in this country.¹²³

The little Paca Street school that Elizabeth opened in September, 1808, was not destined to be the foundation of the American Catholic school system, but rather a prelude or a preparation for that great work. Mrs. Seton opened school with four boarders, and these with her three girls were all she could properly care for at the time since she was suffering from ill health.¹²⁴ Her little school had a spiritual atmosphere about it, Mrs. Seton's aim being to give the children a solid religious education. The course of studies was based on the curriculum of a young ladies' academy and consisted of Christian doctrine, geography, history, writing, arithmetic, English, French, plain and fancy needlework. The children attended Mass each morning,

¹²¹ "Archbishop Neale," Archives of the Visitation Convent, Georgetown, D. C.; Richard J. Purcell, *D. A. B.* (1933), XIII, 400-401.

¹²² Rescript in Archives-Visitation. See also George P. Lathrop and Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, *A Story of Courage: Annals of Georgetown Convent of the Visitation* (1894), 179-180.

¹²³ Henry Churchill Semple, ed., *Ursulines of New Orleans and Our Lady of Prompt Succor* (1925), *passim*.

¹²⁴ Code, *Letters*, 272.

and Father Pierre Babad gave them religious instruction.¹²⁵ The frankness of Father Babad and the suavity of his manners won the confidence of Mrs. Seton. He became the spiritual father and protector of the little family.¹²⁶

In December Mrs. Seton was joined in her educational work by Miss Cecilia O'Conway of Philadelphia. Miss O'Conway had decided to go to Europe to enter a religious community when Father Babad became acquainted with her while on a trip to Philadelphia. The French clergymen in Baltimore and Boston had already conceived the idea, so it appears, that Elizabeth Seton should be the foundress of a religious community which while looking towards the sanctification of its members would also bestow care upon the young in schools, orphan asylums, or wherever else their services might be needed. When Father Babad told Miss O'Conway of Mrs. Seton, she abandoned her former project and came to Baltimore.¹²⁷ In the spring of 1809 they were joined by Mary Ann Butler, by Maria Murphy, a niece of the well known journalist, Mathew Carey, and shortly after by Susan Clossy of New York.¹²⁸

As the number of pupils at the Paca Street School increased, it became necessary to look to the future. On January 21, 1809, Elizabeth wrote to Filippo Filicchi, the elder of the Filicchi brothers, asking him to erect a building on the vacant lot that belonged to the college.¹²⁹ It had always been her intention to help the children of the poor, but in order to obtain funds for this project, it would be necessary first to open an academy.

It was Samuel Sutherland Cooper (1769-1843), a convert like herself, who was to make her dream come true, though in a

¹²⁵ White, *op. cit.*, 220-221. When DuBourg resigned his position as president of Georgetown College, he went to Havana, Cuba, to assist another Sulpician exile, M. Babad in founding a college there. When it was suppressed by Spanish officials because they looked with suspicion on the French, Father DuBourg, accompanied by Father Babad, returned to Baltimore. They brought with them several pupils who formed the nucleus of St. Mary's College—Herbermann, *op. cit.*, 44.

¹²⁶ White, *op. cit.*, 221.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 230; Code-de Barberey, *Seton*, 241-242.

¹²⁸ Herbermann, *op. cit.*, 222.

¹²⁹ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 232.

manner different from the one she had conceived. Cooper had entered St. Mary's as an ecclesiastical student shortly after he had been received into the Catholic Church at Philadelphia in the fall of 1807. His conversion in that city had caused quite a sensation.¹³⁰ His half-brother was Commodore Richard Dale, who had served as first lieutenant under John Paul Jones on the *Bonne Homme Richard* in the battle with the *Serapis* on September 23, 1779, and later, 1801-1802, had commanded a squadron in the Mediterranean.¹³¹ Cooper early in life had become a prosperous shipping merchant in Philadelphia. On one of his journeys he fell dangerously ill at Paris. At that time he felt an urge to read the Scriptures and was impressed particularly by the New Testament. A Protestant friend advised him to examine the claims of the different denominations and then embrace the one that appeared best founded on truth. Accordingly he provided himself with doctrinal books of the various sects. On his return to Philadelphia he consulted with Bishop William White and other Episcopalian clergymen in order to satisfy himself with the reasons which led to the separation of churches in the sixteenth century. Unconvinced by their answers, he came to the conclusion that, despite the evils rampant among members of the Catholic Church at that time, the so-called Reformers of the sixteenth century had precipitated a revolution rather than a reformation. His conclusion brought him to seek entrance into the Catholic Church.¹³²

Early in 1809 Mr. Cooper offered to Father DuBourg a sum of money for the advancement of religion. Bishop Carroll and Father DuBourg thought to use this donation for the school they had planned with Mrs. Seton; their idea was to build on land near the college, but Cooper wanted the institution to be located on a farm at Emmitsburg, Maryland, and his wishes were regarded. The farm was purchased, and the bill of sale for the land was made in the names of Cooper, DuBourg, and Dubois.¹³³

¹³⁰ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, I, 317.

¹³¹ John Edward McGarity, "Rev. Samuel Sutherland Cooper." Master's thesis, Catholic University (1926), 4-5.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 8-10.

¹³³ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 242.

The last named, a cultured Parisian gentleman, was at the time doing missionary work in western Maryland. He had built the first church at Frederick, a town lying south of Emmitsburg, and about 1808 had opened a school which became Mount St. Mary's.¹³⁴

Though Elizabeth in January, 1809, had made a direct appeal to Signor Filicchi for financial aid in behalf of her project,¹³⁵ she wrote again in February to inform him of Mr. Cooper's offer and of his desire to extend the plan beyond the education of poor children to the establishment of a factory for the reception of the aged and uneducated, who could be employed in spinning, knitting, and the like. She told the good news also to her true and constant Julia Scott, expressing her joy "at the prospect of being able to assist the poor, visit the sick, comfort the sorrowful, clothe the little innocents and teach them to love God!"¹³⁶

Toward the end of April Mrs. Seton received Cecilia and Harriet Seton into her household. Cecilia's health had grown so alarming that her brother James yielded to her desire of joining her sister-in-law. Harriet was sent with her, and their brother Samuel accompanied them as protector. Having seen the safe arrival of his sisters in Baltimore, Samuel returned to New York,¹³⁷ but Harriet remained to care for Cecilia. The former had been warned before her departure for Baltimore that she should not become a Catholic, for they feared her inclinations were in that direction since she manifested such devotion to both Cecilia and Mrs. Seton.

Up to now the little band of women had been living only a quasi-religious life, but Bishop Carroll thought it opportune to form them into a religious community. He conferred on Mrs. Seton the title of Mother and in the college chapel received her

¹³⁴ Mary M. Meline and E. F. X. McSweeney, *Story of the Mountain* (1911), I, 10, 12, 13-14.

¹³⁵ Code-De Berberey, *Seton*, 237. Because of the Napoleonic wars communication became very irregular and some years elapsed before Mrs. Seton heard again from the Filicchi.

¹³⁶ Code, *Letters*, 291.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 295.

vows which she made for the period of one year. The title, "Community of St. Joseph," was adopted, and on the feast of Corpus Christi, June 2, 1809, the Sisters made their first public appearance in their religious garb.¹³⁸ Henceforth their lives were dedicated to the service of God in the capacity in which they could best serve in promoting the demands of Catholic action in those days.

On June 21, 1809, Mother Seton with Cecilia, Harriet, Sister Maria Murphy and Mrs. Seton's daughter Anna left Baltimore to found their new "poor school" which would mark the realization of the Setonian dream of a free school. On arriving in that valley they found that the old Flemming homestead, which was intended for the Sisters, was not ready for occupancy. Father John Dubois, however, who had recently moved from his two-room log cabin on the side of the mountain to live at the seminary, placed his former abode at their disposal. Here they lived for six weeks while waiting for the renovation of the Flemming home.¹³⁹

It was not long before Harriet Seton wished to be received into the Catholic Church, and on July 22 she embraced Catholicism.¹⁴⁰ The news of Harriet's conversion brought her letters full of horror and indignation. Mr. and Mrs. Ogden, with whom she had formerly lived, were the most aggrieved. Her conversion was attributed to "that fatal influence which has not only brought on us extreme distress, but has drawn you aside from the straight path towards heaven, and from the society of your family and friends."¹⁴¹

Soon after Harriet's conversion the other members of the

¹³⁸ Archives of St. Joseph College, Emmitsburg, Maryland. Cf. Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 252-254.

¹³⁹ White, *op. cit.*, 243-248.

¹⁴⁰ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 257-259.

¹⁴¹ Robert Seton, *Memoir*, II, 65. Harriet Seton was a few years older than Cecilia. She had lived at the height of fashion and amusement, and was the "belle of New York."—Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 258. She was also at the time engaged to Mrs. Seton's half-brother, Barclay Bayley, who had left for the West Indies ostensibly for the purpose of making a fortune.—Code, *Letters*, 304.

community came from Baltimore,¹⁴² and they all removed to their small two-story house on the farm. The Sisters immediately entered upon the task of teaching the poor children in the neighborhood, visiting the sick, and instructing the ignorant. They had also engaged themselves to supply the college and two seminaries with knitted socks and spun cloth.¹⁴³

Mrs. Seton realized that they must have a larger building, but it was not until late in February that they were able to move into their new log house. In the meantime they suffered untold hardships. The old house in which they lived was so poorly constructed that many a morning the Sisters awoke to find themselves covered with snow. Death visited the household when Harriet Seton unexpectedly died on December 22. She was buried in the woods close to the Sisters' dwelling.¹⁴⁴ The poverty of the community was extreme. There was lack of funds and the agents of Mr. Filicchi informed Mother Seton, through Mr. Craig, that they could send her nothing more. Mrs. Seton knew there was some explanation, for she felt that the Filicchi were too constant in their friendship ever to forsake her,¹⁴⁵ nor did she think that they had suffered any serious financial losses. Mrs. Scott was most generous, but there were many demands for the money she sent. Mother Seton also acknowledged thoughtful acts of kindness of Mr. Cooper.¹⁴⁶ Bishop Carroll and the Sulpician priests would gladly have aided had they been in a position to do so.¹⁴⁷ It is probable also that they did not realize at the time the distressing situation in which the Sisters found themselves.

Their suffering and sacrifices were soon to bear fruit. On February 22, 1810, on the completion of the "White House," Mother

¹⁴² The two younger Seton children had come on earlier to be with their mother. Her two sons came from St. Mary's in Baltimore and were placed under the care of Father Dubois and his assistants.

¹⁴³ Code, *Letters*, 302. There were now sixteen of them altogether; namely, Harriet and Cecilia Seton, Mrs. Seton's three daughters, and eleven Sisters including Mother Seton.

¹⁴⁴ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 281.

¹⁴⁵ Code, *Letters*, 305.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 316.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 270.

Seton opened to children from Saint Joseph's parish in Emmitsburg, the first free Catholic common school in the United States. There were twenty pupils the first day, and they were given not only free instruction, but free text books and a "substantial dinner."¹⁴⁸ The children received at Saint Joseph's Valley were boys and girls, white and black. Mother Seton in taking the Negro children was following the example of her maternal grandfather, the Reverend Richard Charlton, who had worked most zealously in behalf of the colored race.¹⁴⁹

Thus was inaugurated the parochial school system which was destined to continue and to become the characteristic educational institution of the Catholic Church in this country, uniting in its administration the bishop, the parish priest, and the religious teaching community.¹⁵⁰ The other parish schools existing at this time were boys' tuitional schools conducted by laymen and of an intermittent existence. In Philadelphia St. Joseph, St. Mary, and Holy Trinity parishes had such schools. In New York Father William O'Brien had opened in 1800 a parish school at St. Peter's. It was the nearest approach to the parochial school system, but its teachers were laymen and its pupils only boys. Moreover, its permanence was not assured until 1820, when it was placed under the direction of the Sisters of Charity. Thus to Mother Seton must be attributed the title of "Foundress of the Parochial School System."¹⁵¹

To assure themselves of financial support, Mother Seton and her Sisters opened their female boarding school on May 14, 1810. The eagerness of the Catholics for the education of their daughters is shown by the fact that before the close of the school in June there were thirty boarders.¹⁵² It was an auspicious portent.

¹⁴⁸ Sister Mary Regis Hoare, *Mother Seton, Foundress of the American Parochial School System* (1942), 49.

¹⁴⁹ Frank Klingberg, *American Humanitarianism in Colonial New York* (1940), 143-146, 161. *Infra*, 289, Note 39.

¹⁵⁰ Hoare, *op. cit.*, 49.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 64. In 1806, the legislature of New York granted a petition of the Catholics to allot a portion of the public school funds to Saint Peter's. This act marked the beginning of state aid to Catholic education.

¹⁵² White, *op. cit.*, 267. The manufactory envisioned by Cooper never materialized. In her letters to Mrs. Scott Mother Seton alludes to the

In August, 1810, Bishop Flaget, returning from France, brought to the little community of Emmitsburg the rules which St. Vincent de Paul had given his Daughters of Charity when he had founded their congregation in the sixteenth century. Two points of the rule, however, offered difficulty and caused grave concern, especially to Mother Seton. The first stipulated that the Sisters should devote themselves exclusively to the poor. This was impossible for the Emmitsburg Sisters since they must earn a livelihood in order to provide means of carrying their ministrations to the poor. The second was the regulation that widows admitted into the society must be free of obligations to dependents. Mother Seton feared that she might have to leave the community and seek elsewhere a haven for herself and her children. After two years of deliberation Bishop Carroll and his advisers decided to modify the rule in these two respects. The modified rule was adopted by the community in January, 1812. The former Sisters of St. Joseph became known as the Sisters of Charity.¹⁵³

Mother Seton during her own lifetime was to witness the remarkable growth of her community. The first call for expansion came in 1817 from Philadelphia. Bishop Egan, through her old friend, Father Hurley, solicited the services of the Sisters for an orphan asylum in that city.¹⁵⁴ She gladly sent three of her Sisters. Again in 1817, at the request of Bishop Connolly of New York, she sent her Sisters to open a similar institution.¹⁵⁵ It was a different New York from that Mother Seton had left in June, 1808.¹⁵⁶ The despised Irish were making themselves

fact that claim was being brought against them by the family of Cooper for the \$7,000 that he had spent on the land and house.—Code, *Letters*, 300, 367, 371. This probably explains why the Sulpicians had to reimburse Cooper for the \$7,000. When Father Cooper died at Bordeaux, France, 1843, he possessed only eighty dollars.—McGarity, *op. cit.*, 36.

¹⁵³ Mary Coyle O'Neill, *Mother Elizabeth Seton* (1940), 76-85.

¹⁵⁴ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 362-363.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 411.

¹⁵⁶ Mrs. Seton's feelings had been so deeply wounded that on August 20, 1808, after her arrival in Baltimore, she had written to Antonio Filicchi: "If ever I dared to ask anything of God respecting our temporal destination it certainly would be that we may never be compelled to return to New York."—*Ibid.*, 223.

felt in the local politics of the town, and the Democratic party welcomed them into its voting ranks; a new society was replacing the old. In 1820 Mother Seton sent her Sisters to take over the parish school at Saint Peter's. Two years previously she had opened a free school for the children of the German church in Philadelphia.¹⁵⁷

If Mrs. Seton had many consolations during the latter days of her life, there were also many sorrows, for she walked, as it were, "by the side of an open grave."¹⁵⁸ In the spring of 1810 Cecilia's health was again so impaired that Mother Seton took her to Baltimore to consult with physicians there. It was Julia Scott's money that enabled her to care for Cecilia in her last illness and after her death to bring her back to Emmitsburg to rest beside Harriet in the little cemetery. Then came the premature death of Anna, the eldest daughter, in 1812. She had always been for her mother a source of consolation, joy, and laudable pride.¹⁵⁹ The death of the youngest child, Rebecca, was another grief. The child had fallen and injured herself while playing on the ice in the winter of 1812. She was taken to Baltimore and her uncle, Dr. Post, came to see her. Mrs. Scott also brought her to Philadelphia, but in November, 1816, Mother Seton was called upon to send another "rosebud to bloom in heaven."¹⁶⁰ No wonder, when Kit, or Catherine Josephine, became ill in the spring, Mother Seton wrote to Mrs. Scott: "If she is taken, I shall be like a sparrow on the housetop."¹⁶¹ Kit recovered, and when friends in Baltimore and Philadelphia wished her to come to live with them, she begged that she be allowed to remain with her mother.¹⁶²

Never was there a mother more devoted to her children, and they were tenderly attached to her. She had desired to live until she should see her children settled in life. At the time of her death on January 4, 1821, William was a midshipman, and

¹⁵⁷ Code, *Foundresses*, 114.

¹⁵⁸ Code, *Letters*, 319.

¹⁵⁹ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 330-331; Code, *Letters*, 347-349.

¹⁶⁰ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 395-407.

¹⁶¹ Code, *Letters*, 423.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 397.

Richard was with the Filicchi in Leghorn.¹⁶³ She did not fear for Catherine's future, for there were many friends who offered her a home. Moreover, William would provide for his sister. She could, therefore, meet death thankfully and joyfully in the thought that she had accomplished her task.¹⁶⁴

As M. Olier, the Founder of the Sulpicians, had enabled Jeanne Mance to found the Hôtel-Dieu in Montreal, so in the United States the names of the Sulpicians, DuBourg, Dubois, and Bruté, contributed especially to the realization of Mother Seton's mission in life. They were the exemplification of the French dictum of *noblesse oblige*. It was DuBourg who had brought her to Baltimore to start her school. As the first ecclesiastical superior of the community, he always took a lively interest in her establishment even after he was called from Baltimore to be identified with the diocese of New Orleans. Father Dubois, an experienced educator, helped her in writing the regulations of her school.¹⁶⁵ In Bruté, later Bishop of Vincennes, she met a kindred soul. Besides these clergymen there were others for whom Mother Seton entertained the highest regard; among these Bishop Carroll and Bishop Cheverus stood first. Many devoted friends in Maryland worked most earnestly for the advancement of the Emmitsburg institution; Mother Seton's happy relations with them are virgin soil for the historian.

How Mother Seton could accomplish so much is a wonder. There must never have been an idle moment. A keen student of human nature, she showed the same understanding whether she was dealing with her children, the pupils in the school, or her Sisters in religion. Her manner was that of the intelligent and affectionate parent rather than of the pedantic

¹⁶³ Filippo Filicchi had died on August 22, 1816, but her faithful friend, Antonio, remained.

¹⁶⁴ It must have been an added joy for Mother Seton when she learned through her sister, Mrs. Post, that Henry Hobart, now Bishop Hobart, had retained respect and admiration for her.—Robert Seton, *Memoir*, II, 135.

¹⁶⁵ McCann, *op. cit.*, I, 23, 36. The principles of the "model" or "practice" school were employed when Mother Seton established the first normal school at Emmitsburg twenty years before the first public normal school was opened at Lexington, Massachusetts.—Sister Mary Mariella Bowler, *A History of Catholic Colleges for Women in the United States* (1933), 12.

teacher, and this fact explains in part the secret of her success. To one who expected too much from the young she remonstrated:

You and I speak for all eternity, but take an advice from your old Mother. I am a hundred to your thirty in experience, that cruel friend of our earthly journey. When you ask too much at first, you often gain nothing at last—and if the heart is lost, all is lost. If you use such language to your family [students] they cannot love you since they have not *our* microscope to see things as they are. The faults of young people must be moved by prayers and tears because they are constitutional and cannot be frightened out.¹⁶⁶

Her friendship and counsel were highly esteemed by the laity and by the clergy. Because of her great respect for the priesthood it was natural that she should desire to see the zeal for the ministry manifested on all occasions. Thus she did not fail to rebuke a young clergyman who acknowledged his careless preparation of his sermon:

Sir, that awakens my anger. Do you remember a priest holds the honor of God on his lips? Do you not trouble yourself to spread His fire He wishes so much enkindled? If you will not study and prepare while young, what when you are old? There is a mother's lesson.¹⁶⁷

To Mother Elizabeth Seton belongs also a high place in the field of Catholic American literature. She had remarkable literary ability and used her pen most effectively. Listed among her literary work are two volumes of catechetical instructions, two diaries, six volumes of letters, and one journal, all of which portray originality in thought and a unique manner of expression and description. There are also thirteen translations from the French, among which are included the *Life of Saint Vincent de Paul* in four volumes and the *Life of Mademoiselle Le Gras*.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ McCann, *op. cit.*, I, 105.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 104.

¹⁶⁸ William Fletcher, "Mother Seton, Educator and Foundress of the American Catholic Parochial School System," private manuscript (1940), 40-41.

The good that Mother Seton accomplished cannot be adequately evaluated, for so much of it belongs to the realm of the spiritual. That the Catholic Church in the new republic needed her cannot be doubted. She exemplified in her own life that the spirit of womanhood is the spirit of love and self-renunciation in the interest of the future. Bishop Cheverus envisioned the rôle she was to play when he wrote to her on April 13, 1809:

How admirable is Divine Providence! I see already numerous choirs of virgins following you to the altar. I see your holy order diffusing itself in the different parts of the United States, spreading everywhere the good odor of Jesus Christ, and teaching by their angelical lives and pious instructions how to serve God in purity and holiness.¹⁶⁹

An exemplary daughter, a devoted wife, a tender mother, and a sincere religious, Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton was a typical American woman. Far and wide throughout the United States the influence of her charity and zeal continues to radiate. She symbolizes the highest aspirations of American Catholicism. For these reasons James Cardinal Gibbons in 1907 initiated the cause of Mother Seton's canonization when he appointed an ecclesiastical court to make an inquiry regarding her sanctity. When the diocesan process was completed in 1914, the cause of her beatification was taken to Rome.¹⁷⁰ American Catholics await the day when the pioneer and great model of Catholic action in this country will be proclaimed by the Church Saint Elizabeth Seton.

¹⁶⁹ White, *op. cit.*, 237; Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 247.

¹⁷⁰ Code-De Barberey, *Seton*, 510-511. An impetus was given to the movement of her canonization in the summer of 1931, when a committee of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae presented to Pope Pius XI a petition that Elizabeth Bayley Seton be enrolled "among the company of the blessed."—Joseph B. Code, *Mother Seton* [pamphlet], (1934), 30-31.

CHAPTER VIII

FANNY ALLEN AND MIGRANT CONVERTS IN CANADA

An examination of the lives of the early captive converts of New England reveals that, contrary to prevailing opinion, Frances Margaret Allen, more familiarly known as Fanny Allen, was not the first woman from that section of the country to become a religious.¹ Fanny Allen differed, however, from her New England compatriots in that she went to Canada, not as a prisoner of war, but of her own free choice. Because of her father's career and the social position she held in Vermont her conversion to Catholicism, followed by her entrance into the convent, created a sensation among her family, her acquaintances, and the outside world in general.²

In order to appreciate better the social and religious milieu into which Fanny was born, it may be well to consider briefly the part which her father played in the history of Vermont. Born at Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1737, Ethan Allen, at the age of twenty-six, had joined a Connecticut regiment going to the aid of Fort William Henry.³ After the French had ceded Quebec to England by the treaty of 1763 a tide of emigration flowed into Vermont, especially from Connecticut and Massachusetts. Among the number who went thither, about 1776, to found a new home in the New Hampshire Grants, as Vermont was then called, were Ethan Allen and his brothers.⁴ The controversy had already commenced

¹ Louis de Goesbriand, *Catholic Memoirs and Biographies of Vermont and New Hampshire* (1886), 12, called her the first New England nun; likewise John J. A. Becket in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1907), I, 230. See Richard J. Purcell "Matthew Lyon, an Irish Crusader for American Democracy," *Studies* (Dublin), March, 1936, 47-65.

² Zadoc Thompson, "Biographical Sketches of Ethan Allen and Family," *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I (1867), 567, Note.

³ Harrison G. Dwight, "Ethan Allen," *D.A.B.* (1928), I, 188; Stewart H. Holbrook, *Ethan Allen* (1940), 26.

⁴ Thompson, *op. cit.*, I, 564; Jared Sparks, *Ethan Allen* (1902), 9. Previous to his removal into Vermont, Ethan Allen in 1762 had married Mary Brownson (Bronson) of Woodbury, Connecticut.—Holbrook, *op. cit.*, 27.

between the settlers of the New Hampshire Grants and the authorities of New York who claimed the land. Allen, as commandant of the Green Mountain Boys who were organized in 1770, became at once the acknowledged champion of the new settlements.⁵ The New Yorkers, having failed in their attempt to win Allen over by bribery, offered a reward of one hundred fifty pounds for his capture.⁶

Ethan Allen and other principal characters among the settlers now determined to rid themselves of New York interference. To that end they formed a plan in 1774 to establish a new royal colony.⁷ The battle of Lexington and Concord, however, impelled the Vermonters to lay aside this project that they might espouse the cause of liberty. At the request of Connecticut Ethan Allen, leading the Green Mountain Boys, surprised and captured Fort Ticonderoga, May 8, 1775.⁸ Elated by his success, Allen, directed by Schuyler and Montgomery, next undertook to capture Montreal, but the attempt proved abortive. He was taken prisoner on September 25, 1775, was cast into chains, and sent to England. It was not until May, 1778, that the Continental Congress succeeded in effecting his exchange. Before returning to Vermont, he visited General Washington to express thanks for his liberation. He then hastened to join his family and former associates. Although he arrived at Bennington unexpectedly on the last day of May, 1778, the news was soon noised abroad, and he received an enthusiastic welcome.⁹

The Continental Congress at once granted him a brevet commission of colonel in the Continental Army, but Allen became so involved in local affairs that he failed to take advantage of it.¹⁰ During Ethan Allen's absence the Vermonters had declared the district a separate state, and in 1778 they had elected Thomas

⁵ Ira Allen, "The Natural and Political History of the State of Vermont," *Collections of the Vermont Historical Society* (1870), I, 345.

⁶ E. B. O'Callaghan, *Documentary History of the State of New York* (1857), IV, 749-802, 871-873.

⁷ Allen, *op. cit.*, 360.

⁸ Thompson, *op. cit.*, I, 564; Allen, *op. cit.*, 363-364.

⁹ Sparks, Ethan Allen, 88-98.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

Chittenden¹¹ as their first governor. Now that Allen was back home, the Green Mountain Boys, "wishing to profit again by his sword, as well as by his pen and his counsels," appointed him general and commander of the militia of the state.¹² In September, 1778, Allen presented to the Continental Congress Vermont's claim for recognition, but because of the nature of the dispute, Congress resolved to postpone any action.¹³ It was evidently this refusal that led to negotiations between the British and the Vermont leaders. Because of Vermont's proximity to Canada, a profitable trade had begun. Through the secret correspondence of Governor Chittenden and Ethan Allen, with Ira Allen acting as principal manager in the negotiations, Vermont was saved from invasion—thereby, incidentally, safeguarding New York and aiding the cause of the United States.¹⁴

With the treaty of peace, signed in 1783, Allen was able to devote himself to his private affairs and to his agricultural pursuits.¹⁵ He was living at this time in Sunderland, not far from Bennington. In the early part of 1783 his wife died, leaving him with three daughters.¹⁶ The next year he married Mrs. Frances Montresor Buchanan, a dashing young widow of twenty-four with whom he had become acquainted on his frequent journeys to Westminster, Vermont.¹⁷ The courtship was evidently brief and

¹¹ Gilbert H. Doane, "Thomas Chittenden," *D.A.B.* (1930), IV, 80; Davis Read, "Thomas Chittenden, His Life and Times," *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I (1867), 912. Vermont, however, had resisted the invasion of Burgoyne and the victory at Bennington had paved the way for Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga.—Read, *op. cit.*, 911.

¹² Sparks, *Ethan Allen*, 107.

¹³ Hiland Hill, *The History of Vermont* (1868), 346.

¹⁴ Sparks, *Ethan Allen*, 112-122; Hill, *op. cit.*, 359.

¹⁵ Vermont was ceded to the United States by the treaty of peace, but it continued to function as an independent republic until 1791, when it was admitted to the Union.

¹⁶ Thompson, *op. cit.*, I, 567. His only son died while he was in captivity. Mrs. Allen's death, like her life, was quiet and unimportant, but to the last she had clung to her private piety in spite of Ethan's scoffings.—John Pell, *Ethan Allen* (1929), 241.

¹⁷ Frances Montresor's mother was Margaret Schoolcraft, born in New York of Dutch parentage. She had married John Montresor, a Frenchman serving as an officer in the British army in America. Cf. Abbott, *op. cit.*,

his proposal of marriage characteristic of his bold and independent manner. Having come to Westminster on business, Allen stalked in to see Mrs. Buchanan early on the morning of February 16, 1784. After a brief conversation he said, "If we are to be married, now is the time." Immediately Mrs. Buchanan agreed and the two presented themselves before Judge Robinson with the request that he perform the marriage rite. "When?" queried the Judge. "Now," answered Ethan. When during the ceremony the Judge asked whether Allen promised to live with Fanny "agreeable to the law of God," the patriot hesitated for a moment, then exclaimed: "The Law of God as written in the book of nature? Yes, go on."¹⁸ The *Vermont Gazetteer*, February 21, 1784. carried the following announcement:

Married at Westminster on the 9th of February the Hon. General Ethan Allen to the amiable Mrs. Lydia¹⁹ Buchanan, a lady possessing in an eminent degree every graceful qualification requisite to render the hymeneal bonds felicitous.²⁰

Ethan Allen took his new wife back home to Sunderland, and on November 13, 1784, Frances Margaret was born.²¹ Allen was now busily engaged writing his brochure on *Reason the Only Oracle of Man or a Compendium System of Natural Religion*. He had been dabbling in philosophy for some time and prided himself on being a thinker and writer as well as a leader and warrior.²² He had difficulty, however, in getting a publisher to

51, 52, 59, 61, 69, 74. Frances Montresor inherited her father's delicate features and sensitive, vivacious nature. Upon the death of Captain Montresor, her mother had married Colonel Brean Brush, who had accumulated 60,000 acres of land in Vermont. At his death he left his step-daughter 20,000 acres. Frances had been persuaded by her mother in 1776 to marry a British officer, Captain John Buchanan, who afterwards lost his life in a naval engagement. The young Mrs. Frances Buchanan came to Westminster, Vermont, to live with her mother. Here she met Ethan Allen, who began to court her.—Orrin Peer Allen, *Allen Memorial* (1907), 44-45.

¹⁸ Holbrook, *op. cit.*, 210-213; Pell, *op. cit.*, 244-245.

¹⁹ Newspaper error.

²⁰ Thompson, *op. cit.*, I, 567.

²¹ Holbrook, *op. cit.*, 213.

²² Thompson, *loc. cit.*

place the work on the market, and when finally the book appeared—the first of its kind in America—there was a furor, especially among the clergy of New England. The free-thinkers were overjoyed that they now had a “champion so able to lock horns with the dominant clergy.”²³

Conjointly with these efforts at authorship, Allen kept up his interests in the affairs of the independent republic. The commercial intercourse continuing to expand between Canada and New Hampshire,²⁴ his brothers were doing a thriving lumber business, and Ethan himself, as a member of the Onion River Company, had closed nine deals in 1783.²⁵ His fame as a champion of the rights of others extended beyond the borders of his own state. When disputes arose between the settlers in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania and their state government, Allen was called upon to mediate their grievances. No doubt angered by the treatment Congress had shown the Vermonters in refusing them stateship, Allen proposed that the Wyoming Valley territory should constitute itself a new state.²⁶ When Daniel Shays, however, the leader of the Massachusetts Rebellion in 1787, offered him the command of the insurgents, he contemptuously refused and bade the delegates leave Vermont.²⁷ He was in 1787 enjoying life with his family at the home he had built on his farm in Burlington.²⁸ Here, two years later, February 12, 1789, he died of

²³ Holbrook, *op. cit.*, 233.

²⁴ “Documents: English Policy towards America,” *American Historical Review*, VII (1901-1902), 707, and VIII (1902-1903), 78-86; Alfred L. Burt, *The Old Province of Quebec* (1933), 448.

²⁵ Pell, *op. cit.*, 242; Holbrook, *op. cit.*, 246.

²⁶ Holbrook, *op. cit.*, 210-222; Pell, *op. cit.*, 249-250. Pennsylvania, however, soon adopted conciliatory methods, creating the Wyoming county out of the Wyoming townships.—Charles Miner, *History of Wyoming* (1845), 387-388, 412.

²⁷ Ira Allen, *op. cit.*, 469.

²⁸ Besides Fanny there were Hannibal Montresor, born on November 24, 1787, and Ethan, born October 24, 1789. Zadoc Thompson, *op. cit.*, 570-571, gives the second name of Ethan as Voltaire; Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 49, as Alphonso; George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the United States Military Academy at West Point* (1868), I, 102, has Augustus.

apoplexy. Ezra Stiles, on hearing of his death, transcribed in his diary the following:

Died in Vermont the profane and impious Deist, Gen. Ethan Allen, Author of the *Oracles of Reason*, a Book replete with scurrilous Reflexions on Revelation.—“And in Hell he lifted up his Eyes being in Torment.”²⁹

Not so, however, spoke William Bentley of Salem. His diary eulogizes Allen as “the noted Col. *Ethan Allen*, who distinguished himself in the last war in Canada, and since by a book in his name called “*The Oracles of Reason*.”³⁰ The contrast in statement is indicative of the spirit of the times.

After the death of her husband, Mrs. Allen moved back to Westminster with her mother. On October 28, 1795, she married Dr. Jabez Penniman, an eminent Vermont physician. He bought a farm located a short distance from Westminster near the Connecticut River.³¹ Dr. Penniman evidently loved beautiful, vivacious Fanny as if she had been his own daughter and gave her every worldly advantage. He did not, however, appear very generous with Fanny's two younger brothers,³² whom between 1800 and 1803 he asked their Uncle Ira to board, clothe, and educate, as he had his own children for whom he must provide.³³ Though Ira was also married and had three children, he took his two nephews. He entered Hannibal at the University of Vermont, which he had been instrumental in founding and of which he was one of the first trustees.³⁴ Dr. Penniman wished to retain the

²⁹ Stiles, *op. cit.*, III, 345.

³⁰ Bentley, *op. cit.*, I, 120.

³¹ Sister Helen Morrissey, *Ethan Allen's Daughter* (1940), 70. Cf. Davis Read, “Colchester,” *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I (1867), 763-764; Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 258.

³² Julia Smalley, “A Christmas Memory,” *Catholic World*, XVI (1872-1873), 503.

³³ The children of Dr. and Mrs. Penniman were Hortensia, Udney Hay, Julietta, and Adelia Augusta.—Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 259.

³⁴ The University of Vermont had been chartered in 1791, but it was not opened to students until 1800. Its first graduates date from 1804.—N. G. Clark, “University of Vermont,” *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I (1867), 521; G. H. Perkins, *Americana*, XXVIII (1938), 21, 30.

guardianship of the boys. In the family dispute which followed over the property belonging to his wife, Penniman obtained judgment against Ira Allen for \$7,000.³⁵ It was at a time when Ira was struggling against business reverses. As he saw himself overwhelmed with debts which he could not meet, he was compelled to leave the state which owed its existence in great part to his statesmanship.³⁶

In 1810 Dr. Penniman was appointed Collector of Customs at Swanton,³⁷ a town not far from the border of Canada. It was probably after the family had moved to Swanton that Fanny Allen met a wealthy young man of Boston, who was living at the home of Daniel C. Sanders, president of the University of Vermont. According to Lucius E. Chittenden they fell in love, and the young man was impatient for the day when he could return to Boston, enter his father's firm, and marry Fanny.³⁸ Unfortunately, the name of her suitor is not mentioned. It is to be regretted that earlier biographers referred to individuals prominent in the life of Fanny Allen either anonymously or by initials. Thus the transmission of this Vermont girl's story has been rendered difficult.

Fanny grew into womanhood at a time when great social and religious changes were taking place upon the New England scene. Vermont especially was tinctured with the species of infidelity of which her father had been an exponent. Because of Ethan Allen's popularity, his *Oracles of Reason* was probably read throughout New England.³⁹ Its publication drew the attention of southern and eastern New England to the religious condition of the frontier district, and the rising tide of deism caused increasing concern among sincere Christians. The spiritual conquest of the northern frontier constituted an important objective of the Puritan Counter-Reformation, with Vermont a pivotal point. The evangelical movement, which began in 1795, reached

³⁵ James B. Wilbur, *Ira Allen* (1928), II, 343-349.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 358-378; Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 54-56.

³⁷ Davis Read, "Chittenden County," *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, I (1868), 467-468; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 12.

³⁸ Louis E. Chittenden, "The Beautiful American Nun," *Personal Reminiscences* (1893), 84.

³⁹ Richard J. Purcell, *Connecticut in Transition* (1918), 13.

Vermont in the spring of 1801. For the next ten years practically every sizeable community experienced a religious revival.⁴⁰

Fanny, however, with the assurance of youth, apparently remained sceptical. Possessed of beauty, charm, and social prestige, she was the center of admiration. It was, therefore, somewhat surprising that in 1807, in her twenty-third year, this young lady told her parents she wished to go to Montreal to study French. The reason for her request is not known. Chittenden has intimated that she and her fiancé intended to go abroad after they were married.⁴¹ On the other hand, Goesbriand thinks she wished to go to Canada to obtain information about the doctrine and practices of Catholics.⁴² It has been suggested that Fanny was probably in revolt against the narrow Presbyterianism⁴³ of the day that took occasion of every opportunity to denounce Catholicism. The hackneyed diatribes she heard against Catholics and a book of supposed convent horrors that she had read probably aroused her curiosity.⁴⁴ Of the same inquiring mind as her father, she determined to seek for herself first-hand information. One may ask why Fanny should have become interested in the Catholic religion or how she knew of the convent school in Montreal. Through commercial intercourse between Canada and Vermont, the nearness of Swanton to Montreal, and the position of her stepfather as customs officer, she must have heard of the French Canadians beyond the border. Chittenden says that the convent schools of

⁴⁰ David M. Ludlum, *Social Ferment in Vermont* (1939), 25-50.

⁴¹ Chittenden, *op. cit.*, 84, 86. Chittenden errs in saying that Fanny was eighteen at the time of her request.

⁴² Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 13.

⁴³ Presbyterianism and Congregationalism are terms that are often used interchangeably. Congregationalism had become the dominant religion with the coming of the settlers to Vermont. At the time when Ethan Allen took Ticonderoga, Vermont had eleven Congregational and four Baptist churches.—Henry Hall, *Ethan Allen* (1892), 204. When Vermont was admitted into the Union in 1791, the settlers, sharing the prevailing sentiments of New England, began their state with civil proscription of the Catholic religion.—Cobb, *op. cit.*, 517.

⁴⁴ C. Alice Baker, "Ethan Allen and His Daughter," *History and Proceedings of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association*, IV (1905), 53-54.

Canada were held in high esteem even at that time.⁴⁵ She may also have come in contact with a few Catholics dwelling in the neighborhood.⁴⁶

Fanny's mother and stepfather were evidently disturbed over her request, but seeing her determination, they consented provided she first be baptized. Because Dr. and Mrs. Penniman had previously seemed to be indifferent to religion, their insistence on Fanny's baptism before her visit to Canada would lead one to conclude that they must have been affected by the religious movements. The Reverend Daniel Barber, an itinerant Episcopalian missionary from Claremont, New Hampshire, performed the ceremony. Baker states that the rite was administered in the Presbyterian meeting house,⁴⁷ but it is more likely that it was performed at home, as Daniel Barber was converted from Congregationalism and ordained an Episcopalian minister shortly after 1786.⁴⁸ Fanny is said to have laughed all during the ceremony

⁴⁵ Chittenden, *op. cit.*, 85.

⁴⁶ Vermont was not only discovered, but it was also first settled by Catholics. Catholicity had once flourished among the Abnaki, who dwelt on the shores of Lake Champlain, the Missisquoi River, and Otter Creek. In 1734 there were fourteen Catholic families in the neighborhood of Crown Point. Sir Peter Kalm, the Swedish naturalist, when passing through the Lake Champlain district in 1749 had written: "Near every town and village peopled by convert Indians are one or two Jesuits. . . . There are likewise Jesuits with those who are not converted so that there is commonly a Jesuit in every village belonging to the Indians."—George Barney, "Swanton," *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, IV (1882), 960. Where Swanton now stands on the banks of the Missisquoi the Jesuits had established a mission and built a chapel which was in existence until 1775. With the advance of the English pioneers after the intercolonial wars Vermont no longer had a Catholic priest. With the creation of the diocese of Baltimore in 1789 Vermont was nominally under the jurisdiction of Baltimore, but the Bishop of Quebec continued to look after the spiritual interests of the Catholic settlers and the Indians there. When Boston was made a diocese in 1808, Vermont formed part of its territory. Father Matignon, visiting Burlington in 1815, found there about a hundred Catholic Canadians.—Byrne, *op. cit.*, II, 466.

⁴⁷ Baker, "Ethan Allen," *op. cit.*, 54.

⁴⁸ Otis Waite, *History of the Town of Claremont, 1764-1894* (1895), 102. Cf. Daniel Barber, *Catholic Worship and Piety Explained* (1821), 30-31, *infra*, 198.

and for such unbecoming conduct she was rebuked by the reverend clergyman.⁴⁹ The requirements, however, were fulfilled, and her wish was granted. Accordingly she entered the boarding school of the Sisters of Notre Dame at Montreal. Ready to argue and maintain her own opinion, Fanny became a disturbing element in the school; whereupon the Sisters thought it would be better to send her home in order to safeguard the others confided to their keeping. There was, however, one Sister who saw the noble character of the girl and seemed to realize the force for good she would become if converted. Hence the Sister interceded that she be given a few more weeks of probation. "God and His Blessed Mother will subdue her pride, even should it require a miracle," the Sister is said to have remarked.⁵⁰ Fanny did not improve as time passed, and on September 7 there was left only one more day of reprieve. On the eve of the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8, she was helping her Sister friend to arrange flowers for the altar. As the Sister gave Fanny a vase to place near the tabernacle, she said to her "Be sure you adore our Sacramental Lord in doing so." The girl laughed, but started off with the flowers. When ready to pass the tabernacle, she stood still, finding herself unable to move. Each attempt found her motionless. Awestruck she fell on her knees and uttered her first act of faith, "My God, My God."⁵¹

To those who view the action supernaturally, the experience signified the grace of conversion, for notwithstanding her seeming hostility, probably staged as a defense reaction, Fanny was in reality seeking the truth. To the materially minded the incident was simply an illusion wrought upon the spirit of an overweening, self-confident girl.⁵² The fact, however, remains that Fanny's proud and independent spirit had been overcome. She asked to be received into the Catholic Church. Father Le Saulnier, pastor of

⁴⁹ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 295.

⁵⁰ Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 86.

⁵¹ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 296; Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 86-87; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 14.

⁵² Cf. Baker, "Ethan Allen," *op. cit.*, 55.

Notre Dame parish, baptized her.⁵³ Shortly after, at the time of her first Communion, she resolved to become a nun. In the meantime she wrote to her parents informing them of the step she had taken and of her plans. Her mother and her stepfather set out for Canada. They demanded that she should return home with them. It was reprehensible enough that she had become a Catholic, but it was inconceivable that she should enclose herself behind convent walls. A season or two of worldly pleasure and social enjoyment would cause her to forget her present intentions. Surprisingly enough, the headstrong girl consented to return.⁵⁴

Once they were home, there began a round of festivities to distract her from her purpose. Fanny's mother confided the situation to a few intimate friends in order to obtain their assistance in the difficult task of ruling her daughter. Among the number was Mrs. Ebenezer Marvin, an Episcopalian of the High Church stamp, who lived at Sheldon.⁵⁵ Fanny was invited to spend the winter with her. Several other young ladies were also staying with acquaintances at Sheldon in order to enjoy the succession of gay parties, sleigh rides, dinners, suppers, and dances given in their honor. Mrs. Julia Smalley, daughter of Mrs. Ebenezer Marvin, speaks of the brilliant Christmas party given for the students who were attending the famous law school of Tapping Reeve at Litchfield, Connecticut.⁵⁶ Among the guests was Fanny Allen.⁵⁷ Her queenly manners, her culture, and her intellectual gifts brought ardent addresses from admirers destined

⁵³ She was baptized conditionally for fear that her lack of proper disposition had made the baptism conferred by Reverend Daniel Barber invalid.—Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 88.

⁵⁴ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 14.

⁵⁵ Smalley, *op. cit.*, 503-504; Stephen Royce, "Dr. Ebenezer Marvin," *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, II (1871), 228; Barney, *op. cit.*, 1052.

⁵⁶ At the beginning of the century the law school established by Tapping Reeve attained such a reputation that young men from every state of the Union went there. The best account of this school may be found in Samuel H. Fisher, *The Litchfield Law School, 1775-1833* (1933). See also George E. Woodbine, "Tapping Reeve," *D.A.B.* (1935), XV, 468-470, and *Appleton's Cyclopaedia* (1888), V, 213.

⁵⁷ Smalley, *op. cit.*, 502.

to be the brightest ornaments of the bench and bar, but Fanny remained impervious.⁵⁸

Mrs. Marvin tried to convert the girl to Episcopalianism by telling her that she would find in that religion all the consolation for which her heart was yearning. Soon her young companions grew suspicious. There was surely something wrong with her. One had discovered a crucifix under her pillow, another had seen a rosary partially revealed as she drew out her handkerchief. Before long it was whispered about that not only had Fanny become a Catholic but that she was contemplating becoming a nun. Some of the more adventurous addressed her directly, but they found her loath to discuss the question, because she knew that they would not understand. It was indeed an enigma to them that one with her talent and ability should contemplate such an absurdity.⁵⁹ Chittenden pictures her fiancé overwhelmed with grief, making to her the most tender and pathetic appeals, promising to give her everything that her heart could desire, yet notwithstanding all wordly offers she remained inflexible.⁶⁰ Her distracted parents sent her to enjoy the gaieties in Philadelphia⁶¹ but pleasures, remonstrances, pleadings, reproaches, and contempt were unavailing.

When at length Fanny began to grow despondent and her face to lose its color, her parents reluctantly consented that she return to Montreal, fearing lest further resistance would imperil her health.⁶² In the spring of 1809 Fanny Allen bade farewell to home and country. Her mother, solicitous for her happiness, is said to have accompanied her to Montreal, for Fanny had not as yet chosen the community to which she would belong.⁶³ She determined to visit and study the convents of all the religious

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 504. Mrs. Marvin's daughter and her husband, the Honorable Benjamin Smalley, later became Catholics.—*Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, IV, 1052-1053; 1143-1144. Mrs. Smalley was considered the most gifted woman writer of northern Vermont.—*Ibid.*, II, 367. She contributed several articles to the *Vermont Historical Gazetteer* and also to the *Catholic World*.—*Ibid.*, IV, 1092-1093.

⁶⁰ Chittenden, *op. cit.*, 86.

⁶¹ Baker, "Ethan Allen," *op. cit.*, 55.

⁶² Chittenden, *op. cit.*, 85.

⁶³ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 18.

orders established at Montreal. Arriving in the city, she probably first visited the Sisters of Notre Dame. The Hôtel-Dieu was close by, and she and her mother entered the church or chapel of that congregation. The picture of the Holy Family above the main altar at once attracted her attention, and Fanny, pointing to the figure of St. Joseph, exclaimed: "Look, there is the man who saved me when I was a child."⁶⁴

Mrs. Penniman recalled an incident that had happened when Fanny was about twelve years of age. The child was playing near the river when an unknown beast arose from the water. Before the monster could reach her, however, an old man suddenly appeared who protected her and sent her home. Arriving there in an agitated frame of mind, the child poured out her story to her mother, who immediately sent a servant to thank her deliverer, but no one could be found.⁶⁵ Whether a dream, a vision, or a physico-psychic phenomenon, the experience produced a lasting impression. It now was a decisive influence in her choice. She would become a Sister of the Hôtel-Dieu of St. Joseph. Accordingly she presented herself to the Sister Superior, Mother Celozen, asking to be admitted into the congregation.⁶⁶ Mother Celozen, however, advised her to return to the boarding school of the Sisters of Notre Dame until she should acquire a more perfect knowledge of French and be more thoroughly instructed in the faith.⁶⁷ Moreover, by thus giving herself time to reflect, she would be the better qualified to decide whether she really wished to become a nurse in the institution founded by Jeanne Mance through the generosity of Madame de Bullion.

Following obediently the suggestion offered by Mother Celozen, Fanny returned to the boarding school, and her mother went back to Vermont.⁶⁸ Continuing firm in her resolve to become a Sister of the Hôtel-Dieu, Fanny Allen was admitted into that Order on September 20. A year later she was invested in the habit of the

⁶⁴ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 18; Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 98.

⁶⁵ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 299; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 18.

⁶⁶ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 18-19.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁶⁸ The Pennimans were then living at Colchester.—*Ibid.*, 12.

congregation.⁶⁹ In the spring of 1810 Dr. and Mrs. Penniman went to see her. Permitted to make a thorough investigation of the convent, they could now return home convinced that Fanny was perfectly happy and contented.⁷⁰ Mrs. Smalley's statement that the Penniman's could never bring themselves to visit their daughter in her convent home is not, therefore, in agreement with Faillon's assertion.⁷¹

After her term of probation Fanny, as a Religious Hospitaller of St. Joseph, pronounced her vows on March 18, 1811.⁷² The church was crowded for the occasion,⁷³ and from now on Sister Fanny became something of a celebrity. Visitors to Montreal from Vermont took advantage of the opportunity to call upon "The Beautiful American Nun" as she came to be called.⁷⁴ The Sister who accompanied her to the parlor remarked her reluctance in accepting these visits, especially during the time of prayer. Frivolous conversation she would always turn into other channels. The time for the visit expiring, in her charming, sprightly manner, she would say, "Time is up," and thus dismiss her guests with unaffected poise.⁷⁵

Fanny had been in the Hôtel-Dieu for about three years when Mrs. Marvin on one occasion asked if she might speak with her

⁶⁹ Archives of the Hôtel-Dieu, Montreal. Fanny asked to be admitted as an extern or domestic sister, as her mother, hoping to deter her from entering the convent, threatened to withhold her share of her father's inheritance, thus depriving her of the dowry requisite to help support the monastery. Mother Celozen and the Sisters, however, decided under the circumstances to dispense with the fee and thus permit her to enter as a choir nun.—Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 105. The dowry, at the time that Fanny Allen entered, was about eight hundred dollars with trousseau.

⁷⁰ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 300-301; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 19. Some time after this Mrs. Penniman is said to have given Fanny the required dowry threefold.—Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 105.

⁷¹ Smalley, *op. cit.*, 505.

⁷² Archives of the Hôtel-Dieu.

⁷³ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 301.

⁷⁴ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 22. In 1809 the steamboat *Vermont* began to make regular trips to Canada. Postal service by courier had been established in 1763 between New York and Montreal, thanks to Benjamin Franklin, who became the first Canadian postmaster.

⁷⁵ Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 107.

alone. When the Sister companion withdrew, the lady entreated Fanny to tell her if she was really and truly happy. Her answer was a merry laugh, followed by a sincere and emphatic assurance in the affirmative. When Mrs. Marvin was ready to leave, Fanny said to her, "Now to convince you that I am not imprisoned within these walls, as you suppose, I will take a little walk with you outside our enclosure." After this interview Mrs. Marvin never doubted that Fanny was happy in the life which she had chosen.⁷⁶

These visits of friends, if they did not lead to conversions, at least led to a more sympathetic understanding of Catholics. People discovered that the work of the Sisters was self-sacrifice exercised in love. As a member of the Hôtel-Dieu, Fanny pursued the allotted round of duties that made up hospital life in those days. Her special work was in the pharmacy. The records speak of her apostolic spirit in propagating and explaining the truth of the Catholic Church to the patients, particularly to those who spoke the English language, many of whom came from the United States.⁷⁷ Her charming personality drew all to her.⁷⁸ It was a familiar sight to see a group of convalescent patients around her, listening to her words with rapt attention.⁷⁹ As the Hôtel-Dieu served as a military hospital during the War of 1812, it is probable that Fanny, with her missionary talents and her knowledge of the language, looked after the medical and spiritual needs of the English-speaking soldiers; or she may have served as an interpreter between the patient and the doctor or priest.⁸⁰ Faillon, the first to write about Sister Allen, said that she was instrumental in

⁷⁶ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 21.

⁷⁷ Archives of the Hôtel-Dieu.

⁷⁸ The following description has been given of Fanny Allen: "In person she was rather above than below the medium height, and of uncommon beauty in form and feature. Her complexion was fair, her eyes dark blue with a singular depth and calmness of expression while the dignity and ease of her manner gave quiet evidence to the refinement and loveliness of her character."—Thompson, *op. cit.*, I, 567, Note.

⁷⁹ Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 106.

⁸⁰ Archives of the Hôtel-Dieu. The hospital at this time was equipped with 232 beds. One of the most important battles of the war, that of Chateauguay, took place about twenty miles outside the town of Montreal.

bringing a great number of converts into the Catholic Church, often as many as four a week.⁸¹

As the continued visits of externs became not only a source of interruption, but also quite fatiguing to one never very strong, Sister Fanny obtained permission from her superior to decline answering such calls, unless they were made by friends of former days.⁸² In the eleventh year of her religious profession, at the age of thirty-five, she contracted lung trouble and on December 10, 1819, she passed away. In her last illness she called for a Protestant physician from the States, who was then living in Montreal. He was present when Father Hubert recited the prayers for the dying. The impression which the scene produced caused him to publish in the papers an account of her death.⁸³ A year and a half later he wrote to the superior of the Hôtel-Dieu saying that he would never forget Sister Allen's beautiful death. He added that he would never again see the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu of St. Joseph, but that he hoped to be reunited with them in Heaven. Having sold his goods, he left Montreal without informing anyone of his destination or project. The Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu conjectured that he went to Europe to join the Church and to enter a religious order.⁸⁴

Sister Allen's life of peace and happiness at the Hôtel-Dieu produced such an impression on her friends and relatives that some of them likewise entered the Catholic Church. By so doing they established, said the non-Catholic Chittenden, "the miraculous character of her own experience."⁸⁵ The contrast between Ethan Allen and his daughter is noteworthy. He in search for truth had

⁸¹ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 302.

⁸² Smalley, *op. cit.*, 506; Chittenden, *op. cit.*, 68.

⁸³ The files of the *Gazette*, Montreal's newspaper established in 1778, lost its records for the years 1818-1826. Information furnished through the courtesy of the *Gazette*. Canada has been unfortunate in the number of disastrous fires that have destroyed archival material.

⁸⁴ Faillon, *Mlle. Mance*, II, 302-303. Sister Helen Morrissey says the Sisters heard later that he had entered a Carthusian Monastery. *Op. cit.*, 112.

⁸⁵ Chittenden, *op. cit.*, 88. The author also claims that the former fiancé of Fanny Allen gave all his possessions to the poor that he might devote himself to the service of the Catholic Church.—*Ibid.*, 88-89.

used reason alone in order to establish a creed satisfying his religious urge. This he found in the idea of a universe guided by Nature's god. Fanny, seeking truth, had found reason supplemented by faith as her spiritual solution. Her father in his scepticism would have scoffed at the idea of the Great Mechanic of the Universe tinkering with His Machine to perform a miracle.⁸⁶ Fanny, on the other hand, always believed that God had worked a miracle in her behalf.

Mrs. Smalley says that, as the years passed, one after another of those present at that Christmas party at Sheldon embraced Catholicism,⁸⁷ though members of Fanny's immediate family were not among the number. Her brother Hannibal had entered West Point on June 15, 1803; Ethan on December 10, 1804.⁸⁸ It is doubtful if the boys ever saw Fanny after she went to Canada, for their duties called them elsewhere. Captain Hannibal Allen died at Norfolk, Virginia, on April 20, 1813. Captain Ethan was honorably discharged from the army on June 1, 1821. After serving as inspector of customs on the Canadian frontier, he retired to private life. He had married May Moody Johnson of Norfolk, Virginia, and upon her death, her sister Martha Washington Johnson. His last days were spent on the paternal estate of the Johnsons at Lebanon, Norfolk County, Virginia, where he died April 20, 1855.⁸⁹

In 1809 at the expiration of Dr. Penniman's term of office as customs collector the family moved to Colchester. Here the doctor served as town clerk and representative. He was also judge of the Probate Court for years. To the last Fanny's mother retained

⁸⁶ Morais, *op. cit.*, 37-38. .

⁸⁷ Smalley, *op. cit.*, 506. Unfortunately Mrs. Smalley failed to record the names so that there are no substantial facts and figures.

⁸⁸ Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 77-79; Cullum, *op. cit.*, I, 92. As West Point was first opened on July 4, 1802, the Allen boys were among its earliest graduates. Hannibal was in a class of two members that graduated on June 27, 1804; the class in which Ethan graduated on November 14, 1806, consisted of fifteen members.—Data furnished by Headquarters of United States Military Academy.

⁸⁹ Cullum, *op. cit.*, 92; Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 79. Through his children there continued the direct line of descendants of Ethan Allen and Frances Montresor.

much of her beauty as well as the refined air which had so charmed society in earlier days.⁹⁰ She became noted for her interest in botany and had many rare plants in her house and garden. With her youngest daughter Adelia she made a collection of the flora in and around Colchester and Burlington.⁹¹ In the latter days of her life she went into society but little. She died at her home in Colchester, October 13, 1834.⁹² All the Penniman girls married persons of distinction. Fanny's eldest half-sister, by her father's first wife, Lucy Allen, married on May 26, 1789, Judge Samuel Hitchcock of Burlington. Both husband and wife occupied important places in the early society of the city.⁹³

Admiration for Fanny Allen has tended to make her an ethereal creature, while there is an ever increasing interest in her story. The first of the English publications to treat of her life was the lecture of the Reverend Zadoc Thompson on "The Allen Family," which was incorporated into the first volume of Abby Maria Hemenway's *Historical Gazetteer* (1868). Miss Hemenway, an outstanding historian of Vermont, became so fascinated with the study of Fanny Allen that she wrote her first and only drama, "Fanny Allen, the First American Nun." It might possibly be proved that Miss Hemenway was led to investigate the claims of the Catholic Church through her interest in Fanny Allen. It is known that Miss Hemenway made it a point to spend part of the first summer after her baptism at the convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Montreal where Fanny had been received into the Catholic Church.⁹⁴

The name of Ethan Allen will always remain associated with the history of Vermont. The monument erected to Fanny Allen

⁹⁰ Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 259.

⁹¹ Theresa O. Weiss, "Faded Flowers," *Vermont Alumnus*, XIX (1940), 153. Mrs. Penniman's herbaria, given to the University of Vermont, form the oldest collection at the University. There were four girls by her marriage to Dr. Penniman.—Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 259, Note 33.

⁹² Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 258.

⁹³ Abby Maria Hemenway, *Vermont Quarterly Gazetteer*, I (1860), 493. The other children by Ethan's first marriage died young. Cf. Orrin Allen, *op. cit.*, 49.

⁹⁴ Frances Harriet Babb, "Abby Maria Hemenway." Master's thesis (1939), 42.

in Winooski Park, Burlington, Vermont, linked his daughter again with her native state. Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Kelly a section of the Ethan Allen farm was given to the Most Reverend Louis de Goesbriand. Here was erected a hospital not far from the Ethan Allen home. It was most fitting that the establishment should be named in honor of Fanny and that the Sisters of the Hôtel-Dieu, Montreal, should be given its direction. Accordingly on May 24, 1894, the Sisters arrived⁹⁵ to begin their ministrations to the sick and suffering. Thus is perpetuated the work among her own people to which Fanny Allen had dedicated her life when she sought admittance to the Hôtel-Dieu in Montreal.

JOHN JACKSON RICHARD

Other interesting early Catholic converts also made Canada their home. No two enter the Catholic Church in exactly the same way, for there are as many and diverse causes operating in individual cases as there are different personalities. Occasional glimpses of the drama enacted in one or other of these converts pique the curiosity. It is regrettable that there is little more than the interest-provoking glimpse of those treated in the following pages.

The ministers of the Methodist Church, under the presidency of Bishop Asbury, were very active, and the zealous preaching of their itinerant missionaries added numbers to their fold.⁹⁶ John Jackson Richard, born at Alexandria, Virginia, on February 21, 1787, had become a Methodist clergyman. At the age of twenty he was preaching in the sparsely settled districts of western New York and Lower Canada.⁹⁷ From Niagara he made his way eastward into Canada reaching Montreal on August 19, 1807. Richard was somewhat astonished when he discovered the progress that had been made by the priests and nuns in that section of the country.⁹⁸ He visited the Seminary of Montreal with the object

⁹⁵ Morrissey, *op. cit.*, 127.

⁹⁶ Sweet, *op. cit.*, 316-317.

⁹⁷ Shea, "Converts," *op. cit.*, 517.

⁹⁸ John Richard, "Conversion of Mr. John Richard Related by Himself," *U.S.C.H.M.*, I (1887), 96-99.

of converting the Sulpicians to the Protestant religion in which he himself so firmly believed.⁹⁹ In the discussions that followed he was given some of the usual Catholic doctrinal works, which he read and studied. The result was that he renounced Methodism on October 31 of that year and entered the Seminary in Montreal. On February 17, 1813, he received the order of priesthood,¹⁰⁰ and four years later he entered the Society of St. Sulpice. It was at this time that Irish immigrants were making their way to Montreal. They needed a priest who knew the English language; hence Father Richard was assigned to them. In a small sacristy attached to one of the minor churches of the city, he assembled them for religious services.¹⁰¹ This small nucleus he lived to see increase in number and importance.

The zealous priest spent a long and useful life among those whom he came to convert. During the Irish exodus of 1847 and 1848 ship-fever had raged aboard the vessels that brought the half-starved peasants to Canada. Father Richard's love for these people constrained him to minister to them. Not only did he provide for the safety of hundreds of orphan children whom the death of parents had left to the mercy of charitable strangers, but he also labored in sheds among the sick and dying. The Protestant mayor of Montreal and the Catholic priest worked side by side to alleviate the terrible distress of the disease, and both died martyrs to duty.¹⁰²

ABBÉ JOHN HOLMES

The best known of the New England converts in Canada during this period was Father John Holmes. Born February 7, 1799, he was the eldest son of distinguished Puritan parents of Windsor, Vermont. Soon after his birth his family moved to the thriving town of Hanover, New Hampshire. Here John entered Dartmouth College, where he studied with a view to entering the Wes-

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

¹⁰⁰ Archives of the Sulpicians in Montreal.

¹⁰¹ J. F. Maguire, *The Irish in America* (1873), 97.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 149. Father Richard died, July 21, 1849.

leyan ministry.¹⁰³ He had commenced his regular classical course in the college when, early in the summer of 1815, his family moved northward to Colebrook, New Hampshire. The boy pleaded for permission to return to Hanover in order to resume his collegiate courses, but his father was inflexible in his refusal. He needed his son's help on the large landed property which he had purchased.¹⁰⁴

John determined to leave home and go to Canada. There, he thought, he would be secure from pursuit and discovery. He hoped also to find work that would be sufficiently remunerative to enable him to complete his education.¹⁰⁵ Accordingly he set out on foot and reached the village of Sherbrooke, Quebec, exhausted and practically penniless. A tanner gave him work, but his father trailed him there a few days later. What passed between them is not known, but Mr. Holmes returned to Colebrook leaving John the horse he had intended for him to ride home.¹⁰⁶

Meanwhile Stephen Burroughs, schoolmaster at Three Rivers, heard the story. Burrough's young manhood had been so turbulent and marked by such reckless escapades that a little of his history bears reviewing. His father, the Reverend Eden Burroughs, Presbyterian minister of Hanover, New Hampshire, had received his doctor's degree from the College of Dartmouth.¹⁰⁷ He gave his son many advantages, but the boy proved remiss. On September 6, 1789, he married his cousin, Sally Davis, daughter of his uncle Ebenezer, a rich proprietor and a member of the legislature of Massachusetts.¹⁰⁸ It was not long, however, before Stephen was again in trouble. Finally, after many vicissitudes, his father-in-law gave him the management of his farm and mills in Stanstead, Canada.¹⁰⁹ Later at Three Rivers he became

¹⁰³ William A. L. Styles, "John Holmes," *The Eikon*, II (1939), 278.

¹⁰⁴ Sister St. Croix Holmes, "An Affectionate Tribute to the Memory of Abbé Holmes," *The Guidon*, XI (1904), 10.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Stephen Burroughs, *Memoirs of the Notorious Stephen Burroughs* (1924), *passim*. On one occasion he took his father's sermons and started out as an itinerant preacher.—*Ibid.*, 56-58.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 186.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 363.

acquainted with Abbé Calonne in whom he found a true friend.¹¹⁰ On March 15, 1815, Stephen Burroughs and his two daughters were received into the Catholic Church.¹¹¹ It was through the kind offices of Abbé Calonne that he received the appointment of teacher in the government school at Three Rivers.¹¹² Wishing to aid his own countryman, Burroughs came to Sherbrooke to see young Holmes and engage him as an assistant in his school. Holmes bade good-bye to the tannery, and the next day he and Mr. Burroughs began the journey to Three Rivers, a distance of ninety miles.¹¹³

Young Holmes entered whole-heartedly upon the duties of his new task. In the spring of 1816 the examination of the pupils was held before a select audience as was the custom in those days. Among the number present was the Abbé Ecuyer, pastor of Yamochiche and friend of Mr. Burroughs. In an interview that took place between the Abbé and John Holmes the priest offered to teach Holmes the Latin courses he had commenced at Dartmouth College. Holmes thought this a splendid opportunity both to acquire the knowledge he so eagerly desired and to enlighten the Abbé on the subject of religion.¹¹⁴

Therefore, in the month of May, 1816, or thereabouts, Holmes took up his abode at the presbytery. He discovered that Catholics were not guilty of the idolatry of which they were accused and that Abbé Ecuyer's life was one of purity and charity. His prejudices vanished one by one, and on May 3 of the following year he was baptized by Abbé Ecuyer.¹¹⁵

Holmes at once informed his father of the step he had taken and the latter seems to have made no objection. Young Holmes, even

¹¹⁰ The Abbé Calonne is well-known in Canadian Church History for his zeal and holiness. He made numerous conversions among the Protestants.—*Les Ursulines des Trois-Rivières*, II, 93.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, II, 274. Mr. Burroughs' daughter Sally, born in 1797 at Hanover, New Hampshire, entered the Ursuline community at Three Rivers in 1819. She became a valuable member of that sisterhood.—*Ibid.*, II, 272, 274-279.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, II, 95.

¹¹³ Holmes, "Affectionate Tribute," *op. cit.*, 11.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

before his conversion to Catholicism, had felt an urge towards the ministry. Abbé Ecuyer now placed him in the Sulpician College at Montreal. From there he entered the theological seminary at Nicolet. Before his ordination to the priesthood John with another ecclesiastic as his companion visited his family at Colebrook. His parents were completely won over by his charming manners, his pleasant and interesting talk, and the love he manifested towards them all. On his return to Nicolet he was ordained, October 4, 1823. His good friend, Abbé Ecuyer, meanwhile had died.¹¹⁶

After serving as curate at Berthier, Father Holmes took up his headquarters at Drummondville from which outpost he ministered to an area which today comprises approximately twenty parishes.¹¹⁷ Within a year after his appointment to this arduous field of labor, he built the first Catholic church at Sherbrooke in 1826. While in this vicinity he frequently visited his family stopping en route to minister to the Catholics scattered along the southern Canadian border.¹¹⁸

The priestly career of Abbé Holmes was fruitful. Since his labors extend beyond the period which this dissertation covers, his contributions to the Catholic Church in Canada must be only briefly summarized. Because of the precarious state of his health, occasioned by exposure on the missions, he was made professor of philosophy at the Grand Seminary in Quebec and four years later director of the Petit Seminary. Here he became one of the foremost educators of the day, an outstanding scientist, and a noted preacher whom contemporary writers have called the "Lacordaire of Canada."¹¹⁹

No patriot was ever more devoted to the interest of the land of his adoption than was Father Holmes. One of his far-seeing projects was his colonization system whereby he encouraged French Canadians to settle in the eastern townships instead of

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹¹⁷ Styles, "John Holmes," *op. cit.*, 278.

¹¹⁸ Holmes, "Affectionate Tribute," *op. cit.*, 43, 45.

¹¹⁹ Auguste Gosselin, *L'Abbé Holmes et l'instruction publique* (1908), 127. Bishop Fenwick's "Memoranda" for July 3, 1828, expresses regret that he could not obtain Abbé Holmes for the Boston diocese.

migrating across the borders. He kept repeating: "The Eastern Townships are the heart of Lower Canada and the most important section of the province."¹²⁰ Perhaps the crowning achievement of Father Holmes was his plan to establish a Catholic University in Canada. The university was to be at the head of the educational system he visualized for his adopted country. Two years after his death in 1854 the royal charter creating Laval University bore the name of Jean Holmes as founder of the institution.¹²¹

The six sisters of Father Holmes also embraced Catholicism. The eldest sister had visited him at Drummondville in the summer of 1826. Later she entered the convent school at Berthier where the following year she was received into the Catholic Church. As Father Holmes after his transfer to Quebec became associated with the Ursulines through a course of studies he taught at the convent, his other five sisters were successively admitted to the convent school between the years 1833 and 1848. Here the doctrines of the Catholic Church became known to them; they saw the influence of this faith on the daily lives of the nuns and their fellow students, and they embraced its tenets.¹²² Only one of the girls returned home to New Hampshire, where she subsequently married. Three married prominent men of Canada; the other two became members of the Ursuline sisterhood. Father Holmes' only brother was likewise converted to Catholicism.¹²³

A simple memorial window in the Catholic Church at Colebrook, donated by his sister, Mrs. Baldwin, commemorates the story of one who, urged by his desire to minister to the spiritual needs of others, found his field of endeavor in our sister country. The name of Abbé Holmes is remembered with love and veneration throughout Canada, and the memory of his life and apostolic labors is but another of the many links binding together Canada and the United States.

¹²⁰ Holmes, "Affectionate Tribute," *op. cit.*, 46.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Styles, "John Holmes," *op. cit.*, 278-279.

¹²³ Father Holmes' nephew, Alfred de Celles, was a Canadian historian and for many years chief of the library of the House of Parliament in Ottawa.

CHAPTER IX

THE BARBER FAMILY

The growth of the Catholic faith in New Hampshire was due in large measure to the conversion and zeal of the Barber family. Thomas Barber, the first in the line of the Barbers in New England and progenitor of Daniel Barber, had come to Windsor, Connecticut, in 1635 at the age of twenty-one. He became prominent in the defense of the colony and served as a soldier with the rank of sergeant in the Pequot War, 1637.¹ His descendants in turn became identified with the history of the state.

Daniel Barber, the sixth in direct line of descent from Thomas Barber, was born October 2, 1756.² He was the eldest of ten children of Daniel Barber and Martha Phelps. His parents were strict Congregationalists who believed in the Bible as the infallible guide to truth, but could not agree in their interpretation of the truth; as a result each quoted the scriptures to bolster up his side of the argument.³

The children were reared and educated in Congregationalism of strictest observance,⁴ with the usual hatred of everything Catholic. When the Quebec Act was passed, 1774, Daniel Barber's grandfather, Lieutenant Thomas Barber, feared it was a ruse of King George III to foist Catholicism on the country. He accordingly warned his grandson to "stand fast and remain in the faith."⁵ The apprehension of such a seeming disaster was evidenced in the farewell sermon of the Reverend Timothy Pipkin to a regiment of Connecticut troops on the point of departure for the front. His exhortation so aroused his hearers that young Daniel Barber, one of the enlistees, wrote afterward:

We were all ready to swear, that this same George by granting the Quebec Bill . . . had thereby become a

¹ Lillian M. Wilson, ed., *Barber Genealogy* (1909), 15-17.

² *Ibid.*, 83; Daniel Barber, *History of My Own Times* (1827), Part I, 4.

³ Daniel Barber, *Catholic Worship*, 21-26.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁵ Daniel Barber, *History*, Part I, 5.

traitor; had broken his coronation oath; was secretly a papist; and whose design it was to oblige this country to submit to the unconstitutional powers of the English monarch, and under him, and by his authority be given up and destroyed soul and body by that frightful image with seven heads and ten horns. The real fears of Popery in New England had its influence; it stimulated many timorous pious people to send their sons to join the military ranks in the field, and jeopardize their lives in the bloody contest. The common word then was, "No King, no Popery!"⁶

The enrollment of volunteers was for only five months, and Daniel Barber, whose health had become impaired, returned home about the tenth or twelfth of December, 1775. Between 1776 and 1780 he rendered further service as a militiaman.⁷ At the end of his military duty, in 1780, he married Chloe Chase (Case), daughter of Judge Owen of Simsbury⁸ and widow of John Chase, who had been killed at the battle of Long Island. Of this union were born Truworth, Virgil, Laura, and Jarvis Barber.⁹

During these years the Standing Order of the Congregational Church continued in the ascendancy, though its power had been challenged since the Great Awakening. If forced to be more tolerant towards dissenters, it still exercised severity towards former members of its congregation who separated from its affiliation.¹⁰ The elder Daniel Barber had withdrawn from the Congregational Church in 1778 and had joined a sect organized by Sergeant Dewey. He was on his way to attend a meeting when he was taken into custody and brought to trial for "a breach of the Sabbath." Though his attorney, Dr. Farnham, argued that liberty of conscience should be allowed, Barber lost the case and

⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Part III, 8-10.

⁸ Virgil Horace Barber, "Memoirs of the Life of Virgil Barber." Manuscript, Woodstock, Md.

⁹ *Ibid.*; Wilson, *op. cit.*, 138.

¹⁰ Cf. Purcell, *Connecticut*, 5-97; Paul W. Coons, *The Achievements of Religious Liberty in Connecticut* (1936), *passim*.

was fined twenty shillings plus the costs of prosecution.¹¹ He died a few months later, April 17, 1779.

His son Daniel still continued to hold fast to the tenets of Congregationalism. Many, however, were being drawn to Episcopalianism through the zealous efforts of Bishop Samuel Seabury and his associates. It is not surprising, therefore, that Daniel Barber soon saw his own beliefs challenged¹² through the zeal of an Episcopalian neighbor. The situation in Connecticut was in marked contrast to that existing in Massachusetts where Unitarianism was supplanting Congregationalism.

The question of the sacerdotal character of clergymen in each particular denomination has always offered a field for controversy since each attributes validity and authenticity to its own clerical office. Barber at that time believed that the call of one to the ministry was of itself a kind of investiture in the office, while the ceremony of imposing hands, as practiced among dissenters, was a sort of token, acknowledging the invisible ministerial power. Barber's conviction was now put to the test, for his neighbor contended that the Episcopalian Church alone enjoyed apostolic succession, and a book which he gave him to read contained such conclusive reasoning that Barber was confused. He carried the volume to his minister with the request that the latter should read it and then give him the argument the case required. The minister returned the book saying that there had already been enough said and written on the subject. Barber then applied to another minister who told him that should he undertake to "interfere with these arguments he would very soon have . . . an old house about his ears."¹³

Shortly afterwards, in the midst of a crowd of people attracted by a military parade, Barber's neighbor, whom he called D. P., undertook to defend the doctrine of apostolic succession in

¹¹ Daniel Barber, *History*, Part I, 9-10. This is not surprising since the administration of the law was still in the hands of justices who were invariably staunch upholders of the Standing Order.—Purcell, *Connecticut*, 92.

¹² Shea affirms that Barber became a Congregational minister in 1783, but Barber makes no mention of it in his account.—Shea, "Converts," *op. cit.*, 576.

¹³ Daniel Barber, *Catholic Worship*, 28-29.

the Episcopal Church. His Congregationalist opponent was put to silence when he sought in vain the assistance of his minister who refused, or was too prudent, to enter the lists in the presence of so many people.¹⁴

Barber now felt compelled to leave a society whose ecclesiastical priesthood was of such a nature that he could neither defend it himself nor find any one willing to defend it for him; yet he feared to lose the esteem of his brethren who held Episcopalianism in horror as a step towards Catholicism. After a year's hesitancy, however, he severed relations with the Congregational Church, became a candidate for Anglican orders, and on October 29, 1786, received the diaconate from Bishop Samuel Seabury in Christ Church, Middletown, Connecticut.¹⁵ Later the family moved to Scanticook, New York, and Barber was ordained priest by Bishop Provoost at Schenectady.¹⁶ After a four years' ministry at Scanticook the Reverend Daniel Barber received an appointment to Manchester, New Hampshire. In 1795 he became the rector of the Episcopalian Union Church at Claremont, New Hampshire, whose most prominent inhabitants had joined the Church of England notwithstanding the persecution by the Congregationalists.¹⁷ The work of Daniel Barber in New Hampshire and eastern Vermont was successful and the Episcopal Church increased considerably during his ministry.¹⁸

The diary of Virgil Barber, begun in 1799 when he was sixteen years old, throws interesting sidelights on the history of the family. The father often received clergymen at his home, and also went frequently to various towns and villages to officiate. The older brother, Truworth, in 1799, had gone west to Marietta, the new settlement founded on the Ohio. (He was home again within two years.) Virgil too wished to go, but he felt that his

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 31; Waite, *op. cit.*, 102.

¹⁶ Daniel Barber, *History*, Part III, 10, and *Catholic Worship*, 31.

¹⁷ Waite, *op. cit.*, 102. The Union Episcopal Church had been erected in 1773.—*Ibid.*, 99. Cf. Hiel Hollister, "Pawlet," *Vermont Historical Gazetteer*, III (1877), 903.

¹⁸ Dix, *op. cit.*, III, 154; Waite, *op. cit.*, 102. Cf. *Documentary History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Vermont* (1870), 14-16, 22, 28, 69, 75.

father would not give his consent. On August 19, 1800, he went to Springfield, Vermont, to study surveying. He attended Dartmouth College for a few months in the fall of 1801 and again in the spring of 1802. His first introduction to Catholicism presented itself when he and his brother, Truworth, went to Canada in October, 1802, to sell some horses. At La Bay they witnessed the celebration of Mass and for the most part were favorably impressed, although they did not approve that little girls should assist the priest, for such they deemed the acolytes. Moreover, they were scandalized that the village girls danced merrily on Sunday.

The two brothers journeyed as far as Quebec and did not return to Claremont until December 4.¹⁹ Virgil secured a position as teacher, and this was probably his chief occupation until he decided to become an Episcopalian minister. He was engaged in the ministry when, on April 30, 1807, he married Jerusha Booth of Vergennes, Vermont.²⁰ Their tastes were similar, and the two read and studied together. Mrs. Barber had a decided talent for literary pursuits, and she eagerly discharged her domestic duties in order to give herself leisure for reading.²¹ The annalist of Trinity Church in New York City affirms that Virgil held several positions of some importance, among them the principalship of the Fairfield Episcopalian Academy near Utica, New York. Previous to his appointment he had been rector of St. John's Church at Waterbury, Connecticut.²²

It is a coincidence that father and son began to doubt the tenets of Anglicanism about the same time,²³ for Daniel Barber lived for over twenty-five years free from the least mistrust or suspicion concerning the correctness and validity of his ordination. While on a journey he chanced to see a Catholic book in which the consecration of Bishop Parker was challenged, and the

¹⁹ Virgil Barber, "Memoirs."

²⁰ Archives of the Visitation Academy, Georgetown, D. C. Virgil in his "Memoirs" has an interesting pen sketch of Jerusha Booth.

²¹ Archives-Visitation; Thomas F. Meehan, "Back of Old St. Peter's, New York," *America*, XXXVII (1927), 419.

²² Dix, *op. cit.*, III, 154.

²³ No account has been found of the Barber family between 1807-1815.

claim made that Queen Elizabeth had applied in vain to several Catholic bishops to consecrate Parker, but finding none, she by "virtue of her own authority empowered a certain character namely Barlow with certain others, to perform the consecration."²⁴

The incident at once perplexed the Reverend Daniel Barber, for he feared that the queen's interference had broken the chain of apostolic succession. He sought an explanation from a learned clergyman,²⁵ whose reply was unsatisfactory; he then resolved to call upon the Reverend Dr. Cheverus of Boston known throughout New England because of his education, refinement, and gentleness of character. Bishop Cheverus received Barber most graciously, treated him with every respect, and answered his questions concerning the Catholic faith and liturgy. At the end of the interview Cheverus gave Barber several books explanatory of the Catholic religion to carry home to Claremont.²⁶ This event probably occurred sometime in 1812. The books were destined to be the instrument of conversion for many. The family read them and lent them to those among their neighbors who evidenced a taste for inquiry. When the heads of the parish began to complain that the books were calculated to do much harm, the Reverend Daniel Barber agreed to gather them up and put them under lock and key.²⁷

²⁴ Daniel Barber, *Catholic Worship*, 31-32. Cf. Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 29-30; Ryan, *op. cit.*, 120.

²⁵ Barber concealed the name of the clergyman to whom he addressed himself.

²⁶ Daniel Barber, *History*, Part II, 15-16 and *Catholic Worship*, 23-32. Cf. Clarke, "Our Converts," *op. cit.*, 114; XIX (1894); also Mary Angela Spelissy, "Sketch of the Life of Philip Scanlon, 1794-1880," *Records*, XI (1900), 397. It has been said repeatedly by various writers, who used Goesbriand's *Memoirs* as the chief source of information, that Daniel Barber owed his conversion in great measure to the influence of Fanny Allen whom he had baptized in 1807. He was said to have been present at her profession and often to have visited her.—Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 31. The writer has found no evidence to support this conjecture. Barber made no reference to Fanny Allen in his writings. Moreover, he declared that he had never seen a priest or been inside a Catholic Church until he went to Boston to consult Bishop Cheverus.—Daniel Barber, *History*, Part III, 15, and *Catholic Worship*, 32.

²⁷ Daniel Barber, *History*, Part II, 16.

The Reverend Virgil Barber asked for admittance into the Catholic Church before his father did. He had been impressed when he read through curiosity a short account of the life of St. Francis Xavier in a little novena book which belonged to an Irish servant girl in his home. So interested was he in the account that he secured a complete copy of the saint's life. When he had finished reading the book, he had already concluded that a religion that could form such men was more than a human institution.²⁸

On a visit to Claremont Virgil and his wife saw the controversial literature that Bishop Cheverus had given to Daniel Barber. It may have been the perusal of some of these works that first caused Virgil to inquire into the validity of Anglican Orders. The following letter written to his bishop, Henry Hobart, from Georgetown College, June 10, 1817, supports this conclusion:

Right Rev. Sir:

Being about to embark for Europe, I cannot leave the country without declaring to you and thereby my late brethren of the Episcopal clergy, my change of religious sentiments, and the causes that contributed to it.

Some time in the beginning of the year 1816, a casual perusal of St. Cyprian's Epistle to Pope Cornelius, strongly induced me to suspect the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Episcopal Church. Considering it a duty of the first magnitude to obtain satisfaction on so important a point, I instantly went into an investigation of it, with such helps as my situation afforded. The authors I consulted were such as Mosheim, Potter, Barrow, Chillingsworth and others of the same class. These tended more and more to confirm my suspicions. As a final resort the holy fathers of the first centuries were taken up. Their testimony was to my apprehension, so clearly against the Episcopalian system that I could not at first be persuaded their most obvious sense would be the real sentiment of the authors. This difficulty obviated, it was at once apparent to my mind that the supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction was given to St. Peter and his successors in the see of Rome from whence it

²⁸ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 73. Cf. Sister Mary Ignatia McDonald, "The Barber Family of Claremont." Master's thesis, Notre Dame University (1931), 3-4.

was delegated in various subordinate degrees over the whole Christian world.

The second point of magnitude and which seemed to me to embrace everything of importance that remained was that of doctrines.

And here the same course was pursued, in order to obtain satisfaction, and precisely the same result followed prejudicial to the pretensions of the Episcopalians and decidedly in favor of the claims of the Catholic Church. In this state of things, as I valued the love of God and deprecated His wrath, there was in my estimation no alternative. And though on one hand the world pointed to a comfortable living that must be abandoned, friends that must be alienated and a family which I loved, which must be set afloat on the tide of uncertainty, still on the other hand eternal truth and love opened to me the promises of the Gospel.

My resolution was accordingly taken. In discharging the painful duty of taking a last farewell of a Bishop and Clergy who have ever possessed a share in the affections of my heart, I beg both your Reverence and them to be assured that my respect and esteem have been augmented rather than suffered diminution by the change of my sentiments on the subject of religion. I subscribe myself your friend and

Very humble Servant,
Virgil H. Barber²⁹

Previous to this letter Virgil had become so disturbed over spiritual problems that he had gone to New York seeking in the libraries of Trinity and St. Paul's and in consultation with Bishop Hobart relief from his misgivings.³⁰ Response from these sources being inadequate to allay his anxiety, he resolved to call upon Father Benedict Joseph Fenwick, S.J., Pastor of St. Peter's Church, Vicar-General and Administrator of the diocese, pending the arrival from Rome of Bishop Connolly to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Bishop Concanen.

Father Fenwick thus became his guide in the spiritual crisis which led him to the Church of Rome. On that first visit Father Fenwick explained Catholic doctrine to Barber and gave him sev-

²⁹ Dix, *op. cit.*, III, 154.

³⁰ Archives Visitation; Meehan, "St. Peter's," *op. cit.*, 418-419.

eral books to read. He invited him to come again if his investigation so inclined him and recommended that he should have frequent recourse to prayer.³¹ On Barber's return to Fairfield Academy, he and his wife spent night after night in reading and discussing works of doctrine and controversy. Gradually the debating circle began to include neighbors and associate teachers in the academy. The more the Barbers searched into the primitive doctrine and discipline of the early Church, the more its identity with Rome became apparent.³²

Mrs. Barber, having been reared in the rigid principles of Puritanism, had imbibed an indescribable dread of Rome. It is related that when their fourth child, Samuel, was born in March, 1814, the father had set his heart on giving him the name of Francis Xavier, whose life he had so admired. Mrs. Barber objected so strenuously that there should be "no popish names" in the family that Virgil consented that she name the boy. Whereupon Mrs. Barber called him Samuel after the prophet in the Old Law.³³

One important cause which operated to shake the belief of Virgil in his own religion was the trial of the Reverend Anthony Kohlman of St. Peter's Church who refused to break the secrecy of the confessional. A watch which had been stolen was restored to the owner through Father Kohlmann. The owner insisted on knowing the name of the thief. Since Father Kohlman would not give the information, the case reached the Supreme Court of the State. The decision was in Kohlmann's favor, and the precedent was thereby set that other states might follow.³⁴

Realizing that Virgil's studies were leading him Romeward, Mrs. Barber asked several ministers to make for her a translation of some of the Latin works in order that she might compare them with those of her husband. This request being complied with, both husband and wife now discovered that they must either become

³¹ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 289-290; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 64.

³² Archives-Visitation; Meehan, "St. Peter's," *op. cit.*, 419.

³³ Archives-Visitation; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 87.

³⁴ Archives-Visitation. For the confessional trial see Robert J. White, "Confession and the Law," *Ecclesiastical Review*, XLVII (1937), 244-257; Wilfred Parsons, S.J., "Rev. Anthony Kohlmann, S.J. (1771-1824)" *C.H.R.*, IV (1918), 46-47.

Catholics or reject their convictions.³⁵ Practical reasons forbade their separation from Protestantism; they were in the prime of life and the future looked bright. How would they support themselves and their four children: Mary, born in 1810; Abigail, 1811; Susan, 1813; Samuel, 1814? Soon there would be an additional member to the household.³⁶ They must surely have heard of the trials that Mrs. Seton had encountered when she broke with her former coreligionists.

In their difficulty Mr. Barber in the latter part of July or early August again sought Father Fenwick. The Protestant clergyman admitted that he could no longer defend the tenets of Protestantism, but his circumstances were such that he hesitated to make the sacrifice entailed by submission to Rome. Father Fenwick advised him to follow his convictions and leave the future to God. Finding Barber through his own efforts already well instructed, Father Fenwick received his profession of faith and admitted him into the Catholic Church.³⁷ Barber then returned to Fairfield, resigned his ministry, professorship,³⁸ and presidency over the Episcopal Seminary, and returned with his family to New York where Father Fenwick had promised to secure pupils for a projected school. On their arrival the Barbers lived with the priest until their home at 24 Vesey Street was ready for occupancy. It is interesting to note that in his new home Barber's former superior, Bishop Hobart, became his next door neighbor. Josephine Barber, in her account of her mother's life, relates that several Protestant ministers used to accompany her father to Mass and Vespers.³⁹ It is definitely known that the Reverend

³⁵ Archives-Visitation.

³⁶ The spiritual crisis endured by Mrs. Barber caused the baby Josephine to be born prematurely on August 9, 1816.—*Ibid.*

³⁷ A few days after his profession of faith, Virgil was baptized *sub conditione*.—Fenwick, "Memoirs," 292. Cf. Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 66, 89. The date is not recorded in the Baptismal Register at St. Peter's.

³⁸ The school had lately been erected into a college by a grant of the state legislature.—Fenwick, "Memoirs," 291.

³⁹ Archives-Visitation. The site of 24 Vesey Street has an interesting history. Here Mother Seton's maternal grandfather, the Reverend Richard Charlton about the middle of the eighteenth century had taught his Negro school.—Frank Klingberg, *op. cit.*, 142, 143-146, 161. Today this is the headquarters of the Catholic *Interracial Review*. *Supra*, 65.

John Kewley, rector of St. George's Protestant Episcopal Church, and the Reverend George E. Ironside, chaplain for Bishop Hobart, entered the Catholic Church about this time.⁴⁰

Mr. Barber's school was a success from the beginning. Some of the best families of New York sent their children to him for instruction. As Mrs. Barber had now become a Catholic, she and her husband received their first Communion in old St. Peter's on Barclay Street, February 9, 1817.⁴¹ Soon after, the two converts, always religiously inclined, expressed to Father Fenwick their desire to separate so that they might consecrate themselves entirely to the service of God, if such a step should be approved. The only obstacle to this plan was the necessity of supporting their children, and since neither they nor Father Fenwick could devise a means to this end, they were counselled to abandon all thought of change.⁴²

⁴⁰ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 297; Louis H. Wetmore, "Catholic Converts," *Catholic Builders* (1932), III, 331. *The Banner of the Cross* for January 30, 1847, says that in 1811 Kewley apostatized to the Roman Church. His course is summed up as follows: "1. in childhood, Popery; 2. in early manhood, infidelity; 3. in later life, Methodism; 4. still later, languid Episcopacy; 5. Popery; and 6. lastly, obscurity at Brussels."—Data furnished by the General Theological Seminary, New York City. The last item has reference to Kewley's leaving the United States and embracing a religious life in Belgium. It is said that Bishop Hobart visited him abroad. Cf. Henry Anstice, *History of St. George's Church in the City of New York, 1752-1811* (1911), 81 *et seq*; James Roosevelt Bayley, *A Brief Sketch of the Early History of the Catholic Church on the Island of New York* (1870), 86.

George E. Ironside, a Scot by birth, was a classical scholar and the author of several books.—Parsons, *Catholic Americana*, 157. As he could no longer make a livelihood in New York after his Catholic affiliations, he secured an appointment to the State Department through John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State in Monroe's administration. See his "Letters," National Archives. Cf. Finotti, *op. cit.*, 178-179. Mr. and Mrs. Barber were sponsors for George Benedict Henry Ironside, born February 7, 1817.—St. Peter's Baptismal Register, 408.

⁴¹ Archives-Visitation; Fenwick, "Memoirs," 292. Josephine had been baptized by Benedict Fenwick on December 24, 1816; George E. Ironside was godfather.—St. Peter's Baptismal Register, 406.

⁴² Archives-Visitation; Fenwick, "Memoirs," 202; Meehan, "St. Peter's," *op. cit.*, 419; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 67-68. The Catholic Church permits married persons to consecrate themselves to God in religion when there is mutual consent and proper provision is made for the children.

Bishop Connolly arrived in New York in the spring of 1817; whereupon Father Fenwick was recalled to Georgetown College. Believing that in his new position Father Fenwick might possibly find a solution to their problem, Mr. and Mrs. Barber wrote to him there, inquiring if arrangements could be made for them in Georgetown. Father Fenwick conceived the plan of placing the two youngest children, the three-year-old Samuel and the baby Josephine, with his mother who lived across the street from the convent of the "Pious Ladies"; the three older girls should remain with their mother. Father Fenwick referred the matter to Father John Grassi, Rector of Georgetown and Superior of the Jesuits in the United States. He consented to permit Virgil Barber to enter the Society, provided arrangements were made for Mrs. Barber's entrance into a community of religious women.⁴³

The next step was to obtain the consent of Archbishop Leonard Neale for the admission of Mrs. Barber into the Order of "Pious Ladies," which he had established in Georgetown and which was to become the American branch of the Visitation. From him Fenwick feared an unfavorable reply since the little community was thought too poor to assume the responsibility of supporting a new member without dowry, much less a woman with three children.⁴⁴ After the death in 1812 of Sister Ignatia Sharpe, who had been the guiding spirit of the community's educational endeavor, the Young Ladies' Academy, founded in 1799, had steadily declined and the clergy seemed to favor Mother Seton's flourishing school at Emmitsburg. Archbishop Carroll during his lifetime had urged his coadjutor, Bishop Neale, to incorporate his community with the Ursulines in New Orleans or Canada, or with the Carmelites of Port Tobacco, since the "Pious Ladies" did not wish to affiliate themselves with Mother Seton's uncloistered community.⁴⁵

⁴³ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 294-295; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 69.

⁴⁴ Lack of means on the part of the parents prevented their defraying any portion of the expense for the maintenance of their children.—Archives-Visitation.

⁴⁵ Neale, however, clung tenaciously to his original plan of establishing an American branch of the Visitandines. Shortly after his death the nuns of the Visitation were canonically erected through the rescript of approbation which they received from Rome in the summer of 1816.—Archives-Visitation; Lathrop and Lathrop, *op. cit.*, 179-182.

Because of her superior intellectual endowments Neale saw in the acceptance of Mrs. Barber into his new Order a means of raising the standard of the academy. He accordingly made arrangements for her to enter the congregation and for her three older daughters to become pupils in the school. Josephine and Samuel were to remain with Mrs. Fenwick until they were of school age. Josephine was then to enter her mother's school and Samuel was to go to Georgetown.

Father Fenwick at once communicated the news to Mr. and Mrs. Barber. The school at 24 Vesey Street was closed, and on June 2 the Barbers set out by boat for Georgetown, stopping on their way to see the Reverend Samuel Cooper.⁴⁶ After their arrival at Georgetown they stayed at the home of Father Fenwick's mother until June 12. On that date, in the presence of the Archbishop and a number of clergy and laity, they subscribed to the act of separation before the altar in the chapel of Georgetown College.⁴⁷ Then after a repast in the Jesuit refectory, Virgil was received into the novitiate, while Mrs. Barber returned to Mrs. Fenwick's and remained there until June 21, when she entered the convent of Archbishop Neale's "Pious Ladies,"⁴⁸ which in August of that year was to receive the approbation of Rome. At this time Virgil was thirty-four and his wife twenty-eight.

On July 26 Mrs. Barber received the habit of the order and took the name of Sister Mary Augustine.⁴⁹ Her novitiate was one of severe trial. Although Mother Teresa Lalor, Sister Agnes Brent, later Mother Agnes, and Father de la Clorivière, who had become

⁴⁶ Virgil Barber, "Memoirs." Mr. and Mrs. Ironside came to pay the Barbers a farewell visit on the eve of their departure.—*Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*; Archives-Visitation; Fenwick, "Memoirs," 296. The Woodstock Letters (1886), XV, 189, say that Virgil entered the Jesuit Society on June 12, 1817; hence the separation must have taken place that day. The "Memoirs" of Virgil Barber confirm this date. Cf. McDonald, *op. cit.*, 13.

⁴⁸ Meehan, "St. Peter's," *op. cit.*, 419, gives the date of separation as June 21. Archbishop Neale died on June 18.—Joseph B. Code, *Dictionary of the Catholic Hierarchy* (1940), 253. Previous to his death the Archbishop had introduced Mrs. Barber to the "Pious Ladies." The Visitation Archives show that Mrs. Barber entered the day after Archbishop Neale's funeral.

⁴⁹ The early accounts speak of her as Sister Mary Austin, but later she came to be known as Sister Mary Augustine.

the spiritual director of the community after the death of Archbishop Neale, were always kind to her, some of the other religious looked upon her with suspicion. They resented the presence of her children, whom they considered a burden on an already impoverished community. Many a night also Sister Mary Augustine sat up remodeling the cast-off dresses of the other pupils for her little daughters.⁵⁰

The day after Virgil's reception, June 13, he left by stage for Baltimore from where on June 19, in company with the Reverend Mr. Cooper and Mr. Neill, he sailed for Leghorn, Italy.⁵¹ In Rome, after an audience with Pope Pius VII, he entered the Jesuit college and remained there until the spring of 1818. Then he returned to America because he learned that his wife had been sent to Baltimore by her superiors, who had yielded to the pressure of unfounded criticism. By the time Barber reached America, however, the superiors had realized their mistake, and Mrs. Barber had been received back at Georgetown.⁵² Virgil did not immediately return to Rome, and was granted permission to visit his parents in Claremont, New Hampshire, before beginning his studies at Georgetown. On his journey to Claremont he was accompanied by Father Charles Ffrench, an Irish convert to the Catholic faith, who at that time was stationed at St. Peter's Church in New York.⁵³ They reached Claremont on a Saturday

⁵⁰ Archives-Visitation.

⁵¹ Virgil Barber, "Memoirs." Cf. Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 71. In Baltimore on June 17, Mr. Barber saw Mr. and Mrs. Ironside who were on their way to Washington with their family.—*Ibid.* Mr. Ironside accompanied Mrs. Barber to the Visitation Convent when she entered, June 21.

⁵² Archives-Visitation. It was whispered among the Sisters that the former Mrs. Barber was about to become a mother.

⁵³ It is said that when Daniel Barber came to New York to meet his son, Virgil, he was accompanied by his sister, Mrs. Noah Tyler, also a resident of Claremont. She made the acquaintance of Father Ffrench, O.P., and told him of her desire to know the truth. After the priest's instructions, she wished to be baptized, but by that time Daniel Barber was preparing to return home since Virgil had not yet arrived. When the latter did come, Father Ffrench told him of his aunt's wishes; whereupon Virgil invited the priest to Claremont.—"Notes of Our Deceased Sisters," Archives—Emmitsburg. For sketch of Ffrench see Richard J. Purcell, *D. A. B.*, VI (1931), 355.

evening, and the next morning Father Ffrench said Mass in the Barber home. The father, after attending Mass, went to his own church and performed the usual Sunday services.⁵⁴ Fearing to offend his parishioners by having Ffrench preach in his church, he asked the priest to address a group in the Barber home. Father Ffrench not only accepted this invitation but remained for a week to give a kind of mission. In the course of this short period he made seven converts among whom were Daniel's wife, his daughter Laura, Mrs. Noah Tyler, and Rosette, Mrs. Tyler's eldest daughter.⁵⁵ Probably Truworth was received into the Church at the same time.

After a short sojourn with his parents Virgil returned to Georgetown College. He and his wife, as well as others, were uncertain whether, on account of their children, they ought to continue to pursue the life they had chosen.⁵⁶ After passing through many trials and difficulties, however, they made their vows. The ceremony took place in the Georgetown Visitation chapel on February 23, 1820. Mrs. Barber first recited the formula of her religious profession, and then Virgil pronounced his vows in the Society of Jesus.⁵⁷

The Visitation chart of 1820 reveals that Sister Mary Augustine was Mistress of the Benevolent School founded by Father Clorivière for the poor of the neighborhood. When Sister Agnes Brent became Mother of the community, she and Father Clorivière realized the necessity of raising the standard of the Academy and of training their teachers for work in the classroom. Since Sister Mary Augustine was so admirably fitted for the task, she was appointed Directress. During the day she taught her classes, and in the evening she drilled the nuns in the methods of teaching and in the branches in which they were deficient.⁵⁸ Under her man-

⁵⁴ Daniel Barber, *History*, Part II, 19.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 19-20. Cf. Meehan, "St. Peter's," *op cit.*, 420.

⁵⁶ Archbishop Maréchal, the successor of Leonard Neale, wished the Sisters of the Visitation to join the Ursulines at Three Rivers, Canada. He entered into correspondence with Archbishop Plessis of Quebec about their transfer.—*Les Ursulines des Trois-Rivières*, II, 188-189. Cf. Lindsay, "Correspondence," *op. cit.*, 457.

⁵⁷ Archives-Visitation; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 96.

⁵⁸ Archives-Visitation.

agement the reputation of the institution steadily increased, and the convent and school progressed rapidly.⁵⁹

It may be inferred from the account given by William Berrian, assistant minister at Trinity Episcopal Church in New York, that Virgil returned to Rome to complete his studies. In a letter written March 18, 1821, during a European trip, Berrian gave the following account of an interview with Barber in Rome:

The desire of seeing a friend, an acquaintance, or even a countryman, in a strange land, is stronger than those can conceive who have never been far from home. It is from a motive of this kind that I made many inquiries of the ecclesiastics whom I met, after Mr. Barber, all of which were fruitless. The conversion of a Protestant clergyman, in a distant country, it could hardly be expected would be much known at Rome, though it was an event of such rare occurrence as to have excited much notice at home. At length a layman, to whom I applied for information, took me to the college of the Jesuits, as a place where a Jesuit might most easily be found. I there inquired again for Mr. Barber. The porter who was a member of the order told me that no person of that name belonged to the institution. After a moment's pause, he suddenly said, as if recollecting himself, perhaps you mean Signori Barberini? It may be, I replied. On being conducted to the person's room I found him whom I sought, transformed in appearance as well as name. He received me with great cordiality and joy, but without any wonder or surprise. I spent a short time with him very pleasantly. He spoke with freedom of the rites and ceremonies of his adopted religion, but with perfect delicacy, and the most studied regard for my feelings. There was even a liberality in censuring what he thought blame-

⁵⁹ *Appleton's Cyclopedia* (1886), I, 162. The financial situation was relieved by a Spanish merchant who brought his two girls to the school and paid for them some years in advance.—Archives-Visitation. Father Clorivière, who belonged to an aristocratic family in Brittany, sold his property and with the proceeds undertook the building of a new academy which was completed in November, 1823. Sister Mary Augustine continued to suffer, however, on account of her children, as she felt they were a burden to the community and because she was aware of the opposition of some of the Sisters.—*Ibid.*

worthy, which was somewhat surprising in a new convert.

A hard bed, laid on bare planks, a table, a desk, two or three chairs, a small crucifix, and the pictures of some Romish saints, were all the articles with which his solitary chamber was furnished. He was dressed in the coarse black cassock, which is the habit of his order; the crown of his head was shaved, and both in his countenance and in all the objects around him, there was an air of austerity and mortification.⁶⁰

Upon completion of his theological studies Virgil's superiors decided to send him to Claremont, New Hampshire. He went first to Boston where he was ordained priest by Bishop Cheverus, December 3, 1822. After Christmas he left for his father's home where he began to labor successfully for the conversion of the people of that vicinity.⁶¹

Laura, the only daughter of Daniel Barber, and her brother, Truworth, had been received into the Catholic Church,⁶² probably when their mother embraced Catholicism, and it is thought that Daniel Barber, too, had joined the Church previous to his son's arrival in Claremont. Rumors had arisen among members of the Episcopal congregation who felt he was using his influence to unsettle the minds of the people. At a meeting on September 29, 1818, they voted that the Rev. James B. Howe be hired "to preach among us for such time as he will agree, not exceeding one year." Later, on November 12, 1818, it was voted "to dismiss the Rev. Daniel Barber from the rectorship."⁶³ The retiring clergyman said farewell to his Episcopal parishioners in the following language:

. . . Now my labor of love with you as your minister is brought to a final close. Never again shall I address you from this place, calling you to virtue, piety and Godliness. How important, then must it be to me, to be fully satis-

⁶⁰ William Berrian, *Travels in France and Italy* (1821), 122.

⁶¹ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 296, Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 72.

⁶² Fitton, *op. cit.*, 282; Duggan, *op. cit.*, 59. Both authors designated the two as Rachael and Israel, but the author has used the names found in Wilson, *op. cit.*, 83. The youngest child, Jarvis, died at the age of three.

⁶³ Waite, *op. cit.*, 122.

fied that in all my public and private admonitions and administrations I have endeavored to lead you into all truth profitable to salvation. As my stewardship is now ended, whatever remains to be done must be the work of some other hands. . . .

With these sentiments and these feelings—with these affections and these tears—I bid you a sorrowful and lasting farewell.⁶⁴

The widespread consequences of the conversion of the Barber family qualify it as a religious movement unparalleled prior to the Oxford Movement with its American repercussions. The Tyler family, which may be properly thought of as part of the Barber family, has almost as interesting a history. Noah Tyler had married Daniel Barber's younger sister, Abigail,⁶⁵ and had come to Claremont to live. Mrs. Tyler and Rosette were received into the Catholic Church by Father Ffrench in 1817. It was about 1821 that the father with his four sons, William, George, Ignatius, and Israel, and his other three daughters, Catharine, Sara Maria, and Martha, became members of the Catholic Church. Rosette, Catherine, and Sara Maria became Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg, Maryland.⁶⁶ Martha likewise became a member of the Emmitsburg community, but she withdrew later to enter the cloistral life of the Visitandines at Kaskaskia, Illinois, and from there joined the new foundation at St. Louis in 1844. William Tyler, their brother, became the first bishop of Hartford, Connecticut, and laid deep the foundations for the spread of the Catholic faith in that diocese.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Daniel Barber, *Christian Worship*, 36.

⁶⁵ Wilson, *op. cit.*, 83.

⁶⁶ Archives-Emmitsburg; Byrne, *op. cit.*, II, 123.

⁶⁷ Richard H. Clarke, "Rt. Rev. William Tyler, D.D.," *Lives of the Deceased Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States* (1888), II, 273-289; Thomas F. Cullen, "William Barber Tyler," *C. H. R.*, XXIII (1937), 17-30; Byrne, *op. cit.*, II, 124; "The Remarkable Conversion of the Barber Family," *Catholic Mind*, XXII (1924), 92. Little is known of the three other brothers, but it would appear that all were Catholics.—Cullen, *op. cit.*, 21.

Passing reference must be made to the part played by the Taylor brothers of Hartford in the foundation of the Catholic Church in Connecticut. Francis Taylor while on a visit to Montreal was so impressed at the

A veritable romance of conversion is that of the Aldens of Claremont. When Father Barber came there as a Catholic priest, the first man to make friendly overtures to him was Colonel Joseph Alden. He not only made a donation to the building fund for the erection of a church, but also assisted in the erection of the wall surrounding the church property. His wife, Lucy Warner Alden, expressed her resentment at this courtesy extended to a priest of Rome; whereupon the colonel turned to her and made the prediction that if she did not watch herself carefully, she and all the family would become Catholics. Shortly afterwards Father Barber called at the Alden home and made so great an impression upon Mrs. Alden, who had been taught to regard the priest as the emissary of Satan, that she began to inquire into the Catholic religion with the result that she and her children were baptized. Thus started the Catholic branch of the Aldens.⁶⁸

Through the influence of the Barbers others became Catholics, and soon Father Barber began the erection of a church. The necessity of going further afield to collect money for its structure brought him to Canada in the winter of 1824. The contributions of the Canadians, added to those made by his own parishioners, provided the means for the completion of the first Catholic church in the state of New Hampshire. It was a brick building with a second story which Father Barber used as a lecture hall and study room, for in order not to be a burden to the congregation the priest, assisted by his aged father, opened an academy. It was largely attended by his father's former parishioners and

effect of the Catholic religion in the lives of the Canadians that he renounced Episcopalianism. Not long after his return home, his aged mother, his sister, and three brothers followed him into the Catholic Church.—Fitton, *op. cit.*, 190-191. In 1829 Francis Taylor purchased a printing press as a means of spreading Catholic information.—Fenwick, "Memoirs," 389, and his "Memoranda," 107. Two of the brothers, Anson and Charles, journeyed to Chicago to construct Chicago's first bridge. Deodat followed, and the brothers became identified with the early history of the Catholic Church in that city. Deodat had the distinction of constructing the first four Catholic churches in the town of Chicago; namely, St. Mary's, St. Patrick's, St. Peter's and St. Joseph's.—G. J. Garraghan, S.J., *The Catholic Church in Chicago, 1673-1871* (1921), 42, 60-61; 65, 91.

⁶⁸ Scannell O'Neill, "Some Mayflower Converts," *Studies*, XV (1921), 81.

others who came from a distance.⁶⁹ The church was connected with the Barber home, a rather large frame building. Here the boarders were lodged.⁷⁰ Among the first students were William Wiley,⁷¹ James Fitton, and William Tyler, all important in the history of the Church in New England. Father Fitton later told in a letter to Sister Mary Josephine, the youngest daughter of Virgil Barber, that when the seminary was in full progress and the house occupied by students, her father slept on a strip of narrow carpet, which in the day he rolled up and hid in the closet.⁷²

⁶⁹ Waite, *op. cit.*, 103. The building was almost opposite the Union Episcopal Church.

⁷⁰ Fitton, *op. cit.*, 281; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 55-56. The small church erected by Father Barber was used as a parish church as late as 1866, and the pastor occupied the old Barber homestead.

⁷¹ William Wiley was likewise a convert to Catholicism. Born in New York in 1803 or 1804, he lost his parents during his infancy. When old enough, he was hired out and later became an indentured servant. Through the instrumentality of a devout Irishman he became interested in the Catholic Church. This so incensed his masters that young Wiley ran away to Boston. Here he was hired by President John Thornton Kirkland of Harvard, and later by Benjamin Fessenden. While in the employ of Fessenden he called on Father Larissey who instructed, baptized, and received him into the Church. This was about 1820. In 1824 he was in Barber's school at Claremont. Later Bishop Fenwick received him as a candidate for the priesthood, and he was ordained in 1827.—Byrne, *op. cit.*, I, 330-333. It was Father Wiley who received into the Catholic Church the Reverend George H. Haskins, an Episcopalian minister of Boston. The latter at once left for Rome where he met the Protestant Episcopal clergyman, the Reverend James Roosevelt Bayley. Through the explanation of certain points of Catholic doctrine Haskins aided materially in the work of Mr. Bayley's conversion.—William D. Kelly, *The Life of Father Haskins* (1899), 44, 49. Having become a Catholic priest, Father Haskins is remembered especially for the establishment of the House of the Angel Guardian in Boston for homeless boys.—*Ibid.*, 69. Cf. O'Grady, *op. cit.*, 59-60.

⁷² Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 77. In a letter dated March 17, 1823, to his superior at Georgetown, the Rev. F. Francis Dzierozynski, Father Barber asked for a teacher of the Society of Jesus to aid him. There were fifty pupils enrolled, and he had been forced to refuse admittance to others. His father assisted him and probably also his brother Truworth, who was unmarried and lived with his parents. His cousin, William Tyler, served as prefect during the hours of recreation and study. The uniform of the pupils was a blue frock coat seamed with yellow buff with a red flowing sash. Father

After a life of edifying piety and zeal Mrs. Daniel Barber died February, 1825, having received the last consolations of religion at the hands of her devoted son. She was the first to be buried in the graveyard near St. Mary's Church.⁷³ Daniel remained with Father Virgil about a year longer, until the latter went to the New Hampshire and Maine missions. Had he been younger, he would probably have followed his son's example and embraced the religious life. As it was, he received minor orders and preached occasionally in the cathedral at Boston. He gave his leisure to the writing of his two pamphlets explaining the arguments which had led him into the Catholic Church. He became thereby one of the apologists of the early American Catholic Church. A government pension granted for his service in the army of the Revolution had made him moderately independent, and he spent his last years visiting in turn the different Jesuit houses and the old Catholic families of Maryland. Daniel died in 1834, in his seventy-eighth year, at the Jesuit mission of St. Inigoes, Maryland, and was buried in the cemetery there.⁷⁴

When Bishop Cheverus returned to France in 1825, Father Fenwick was nominated to the vacant see of Boston. Father Barber journeyed to Baltimore to be present for his friend's consecration, which took place on November 1. After the ceremonies he proceeded to Georgetown, where he met Sister Mary Augustine and his children; it was the last time the family was to be together. The next day he accompanied Bishop Fenwick and Bishop John England of Charlestown, South Carolina, to Boston, where Bishop Fenwick was to be installed.⁷⁵

Barber found that this suited "the taste of the country" and produced "an agreeable impression."—Fordham Archives. Copy from the original loaned through the courtesy of Sister Mary Ignatia McDonald of Manchester, New Hampshire.

⁷³ Daniel Barber, *History*, Part II, 20; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 77.

⁷⁴ McDonald, *op. cit.*, 23-24. It seems probable that Laura and Truworth had died previously. Richard Clarke, "Our Converts," *op. cit.* (1894), 115, speaks of having known and seen personally these three celebrated convert priests; namely, Daniel, Virgil, and the latter's son, Samuel, who also became a Jesuit. He says that the Reverend Daniel Barber visited the Clarke home often when Richard was a child. This may explain his classifying Daniel as a priest. Others also have erred in identifying Daniel as a priest.

⁷⁵ Fenwick, "Memoirs," 281-282; Byrne, *op. cit.*, I, 590.

That Bishop Fenwick was pleased with the work of Father Barber may be gathered from the entry in his "Memoranda," December, 1825:

A small brick Church in Claremont, New Hampshire, erected by the strenuous exertions of the Rev. Virgil H. Barber who now officiates in it. The Catholics who attend it for divine worship are almost entirely converts to the faith within these five or six years past. They are to the number of about one hundred and fifty individuals in all, scattered over a district of ten or fifteen miles.⁷⁶

On June 4 of the next year Bishop Fenwick visited Father Barber's parish and administered Confirmation to twenty-one persons.⁷⁷

In his "Memoranda" for September 13, 1826, Fenwick recorded the arrival from Claremont of William Tyler, a candidate for the ecclesiastical state. The bishop expressed gratification at the progress he had made in his studies under the direction of Father Virgil, and admitted him into the episcopal household to study for the priesthood.⁷⁸ The same year Mary, the eldest daughter of Virgil, entered the Ursuline convent at Charlestown, Massachusetts, and her sister Abigail journeyed to Quebec to begin her novitiate.⁷⁹

Father Barber was sent by Bishop Fenwick, November, 1826, to begin a series of visitations to Dover, New Hampshire, to Bangor, Eastport, and the Indian settlements in Maine. That this arduous mission was most encouraging may be gathered from the entry in the Bishop's "Memoranda" for December 11, 1826:

The Rev'd V. H. Barber returns from his mission and gives the most flattering account of his reception every-

⁷⁶ Fenwick, "Memoranda," I, 2; Byrne, *op. cit.*, I, 590. Cf. Waite, *op. cit.*, 143, who quotes Dr. Hubbard of the Episcopal Church as declaring that the efforts of Virgil Horace Barber were "without fruits so far as conversions to Romanism were concerned."

⁷⁷ Fenwick, "Memoranda," I, 21-22; Byrne, *op. cit.*, I, 590.

⁷⁸ Fenwick, "Memoranda," I, 21-22; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 56.

⁷⁹ Fenwick, "Memoranda," I, 20-26; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 75. See Appendix IV, 227-228, for brief sketch of the children of Virgil Barber.

where by persons of other denominations and of his success among the Catholics—dwells particularly on the favorable prospects at Dover and the great desire of all classes to have a Catholic Church erected there. He is of opinion that the object can be effected and that a considerable sum is already subscribed towards it; and when this is accomplished the means of supporting a priest will be amply sufficient. He speaks, too, of the great piety that prevails among the Indians of both tribes and laments that there is yet no priest among them.⁸⁰

Father Barber was in the Maine mission field when Bishop Fenwick, on January 12, 1828, received from the superior of the Jesuits at Georgetown a letter which recalled Father Barber to the college. As there was no one to replace him, the bishop asked that he be allowed to remain in the diocese a while longer to minister to the Indians in Maine. Here he labored until July, 1830, when he was again recalled to Georgetown.⁸¹ Virgil later filled several posts in Pennsylvania and Maryland. He was stationed at various times in Georgetown, Conewago, and Frederick. He was missioned at Georgetown College at the time of his death in the spring of 1847. As a man, a scholar, and a Jesuit he had been equally distinguished.⁸²

Mrs. Virgil Barber, Sister Mary Augustine, remained at the Georgetown Visitation until 1836. Her labors in behalf of the community were unremitting. The same unswerving industry and interest were observed in every office held by her. For many years bookkeeper for the convent and academy, she manifested the greatest solicitude for its temporal affairs. She was especially careful that the institution should contract no obligation which it could not meet, for she looked upon a debt as a personal degradation. By 1826 the academy bore the reputation of being one of

⁸⁰ Fenwick, "Memoranda," I, 22-23; Byrne, *op. cit.*, I, 591. Cf. Eugene Vetromile, *The Abnakis and Their History* (1866), 102.

⁸¹ Fenwick, "Memoranda," I, 65, 67, 71, 127, and "Memoirs," 344-345; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 77-78.

⁸² Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 80. Virgil Barber is the author of two textbooks: one on geology and the other a revision of the *Latin Grammar* by Alvarez. Copies of the books are in the archives at Woodstock. He also composed an Indian poem called "Catahden."

the best in the land.⁸³ Sister Mary Augustine was most zealous. Her charity, unwearied by repeated acts, was most tender. Young and old, the healthy and the infirm were equally objects of her beneficence.⁸⁴

In 1836 the Visitandine foundation of Kaskaskia, Illinois, which had been established in 1833, was in need of more Sisters. Kaskaskia was under the jurisdiction of Bishop Rosati of St. Louis, who sent Father Borgna, his Vicar-General, to Georgetown with the special request that Sister Mary Augustine be dispatched to aid them.⁸⁵ The permission being granted, Sister Mary Augustine left Georgetown on February 28, 1836. Stopping over at Baltimore and Emmitsburg en route, she did not reach Kaskaskia until September 24, 1836.⁸⁶

With the erection of the new diocese of Chicago, November 28, 1843, Kaskaskia came under the jurisdiction of Bishop William Quarter. Bishop Peter Richard Kenrick, successor of Bishop Rosati, wishing to have the Visitandines in his diocese, asked Mother Agnes Brent to establish a foundation at St. Louis. Complying with his request, Mother Agnes took five companions, among whom were Sister Mary Augustine Barber, her daughter, Sister Mary Josephine Barber, and her niece, Sister Beatrice Tyler.⁸⁷ Sister Mary Augustine labored in St. Louis until the spring of 1848 when she was sent to aid another branch of the Visitandines in Mobile, Alabama. Here through the instruction of the young Sisters she succeeded in raising the standards of the school.⁸⁸

⁸³ Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 96.

⁸⁴ Archives-Visitation.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Father Virgil Barber, who at the time of Sister M. Augustine's departure for the West was stationed in Frederick, Maryland, came to Baltimore to see her. This was the last time they met. Heretofore he had called upon her at intervals at the Visitandine Convent.

⁸⁷ Paul R. Shipman, "Establishment of the Visitation Nuns in the West," *A. C. Q. R.*, XI (1886), 51. Shortly after Mother Agnes and her companions had left Kaskaskia, the town was completely submerged by one of the greatest floods that had visited the Mississippi Valley. The Sisters who had remained at Kaskaskia came to St. Louis.—John Rothensteiner, *History of the Archdiocese of St. Louis* (1928), I, 856. See also Sullivan, *op. cit.*, 73-79.

⁸⁸ Archives-Visitation.

In the winter of 1855-1856, a severe illness brought Sister Mary Augustine to death's door, and Sister Mary Josephine was sent to Mobile to take her mother's place. During the last two years of her life Sister Mary Augustine was confined to the infirmary where she spent the day in reading and praying. Every attention was given the invalid, and the community considered it an honor to have her in their monastery. On January 1, 1860, she died and was buried in the convent cemetery.⁸⁰

The religious history of this family will prove an enigma to many. Notwithstanding the fact that outwardly the Barbers had relinquished all human ties, a study of their correspondence will attest that a strong attachment existed among them. The letters of both parents and children breathe a tender love and sympathy divinized by a supernatural bond of love. The love of the children for their parents was unusual; the mother and father in their limited correspondence always addressed one another as brother and sister. The idealism manifested in married life became, after their conversion to Catholicism, an impelling force that caused natural affection to be superseded by spiritual love. Whatever may be the reader's opinion in the matter, the worth of the contribution to Catholic progress cannot be gainsaid.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* After the death of her mother, Sister Mary Josephine returned to the Visitandine Monastery at St. Louis, where she died in 1887.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

An effort has been made in the preceding chapters to show the contribution of converts to the Catholic Church in America. It is sometimes said that New France received more in the way of spiritual, intellectual, and cultural benefits from this country than she gave in exchange. Granted the influence of these converts in Canada was very great, it must not be forgotten that country provided an opportunity for their conversion and zeal. It must be remembered that while some of their names were prominent, a number of others were destined to remain in obscurity. With the passing of years a changed attitude and approach are noticeable on the part of English Americans with regard to relations between the two peoples. Americans have come to realize that a spirit of appreciation, rather than one of opprobrium, is due those early French Canadians who received the New Englanders into their midst with marks of esteem and friendship.

If the Anglo-American in Canada found that he was influenced by his Catholic surroundings, quite different was the situation in the United States where the Catholic convert was obliged to try to create a Catholic atmosphere. From the time when Father Thayer returned to his native Boston in 1790 Catholic converts helped to lay the foundation of Catholic life in America. Seldom does the influence of a convert fail to draw others to follow his example. To the convert perhaps, as much as to any other influences, may be attributed the gradual breaking down of the traditional Protestant fear of the Catholic Church in this country. In this regard Mother Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton doubtlessly ranks first. Through her parochial school system she and her community brought religious education to the poorer classes, thereby indirectly furthering the cause of democracy. The voluntary services of succeeding teaching communities made possible the system of free parochial education as advocated by the hierarchy.

The convert retained his own distinctive personality and individuality. No one conformed to a type, for each was *sui generis*. It was because conversion was an individual affair that the convert was filled with enthusiastic devotion. It was a far-away cry from "*cujus regio, ejus religio*." The lives of these converts demonstrated that democracy is not a hindrance to Catholic life, but rather a means of promoting its growth. Hence the spirit of freedom and equality found new channels of endeavor. In the case of each conversion there was manifested an openness and honesty in search of religious truth. Far from being regarded as the result of an emotional reaction, the conversion was seen to be an *intellectual* acceptance of a creedal statement. Because of such acceptance, these converts remained steadfast and interested and in many cases enthusiastic in their devotion to their new-found religion.

It is worthy of note that many of those who entered the Catholic Church during the period under discussion were not satisfied to confine themselves to lay action, but sought an outlet for their energy and zeal by entering the ecclesiastical or religious state. Among this number were Samuel Eccleston, who later became fifth Archbishop of the primatial See of Baltimore; William Tyler, first Bishop of Hartford, Connecticut; and Josue Moody, first Bishop of Erie, Pennsylvania. Among Mother Seton's early associates at Emmitsburg were Sisters Elizabeth Wagner and Elizabeth Boyle, both converts to the Catholic Church. The latter is identified as the foundress of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul in New York. Shortly after Sister Mary Augustine Barber departed from the Georgetown Visitation Convent in the District of Columbia for new mission fields, the community received a valuable member in the person of Miss Wilhelmina Jones, daughter of Captain Jacob Jones, a naval hero of the period. In passing, it might be interesting to note that Mrs. Stephen Decatur, née Susan Wheeler of Virginia, became a convert to the Catholic Church.

The greatest number of converts came from the New England and Middle Atlantic States, for it was to this section that most of the immigrants came. Contact with these immigrants and with Catholic principles led to their investigation. When the hierarchy

in the First Provincial Council assembled in Baltimore in 1829 under the presidency of Archbishop James Whitfield, an English convert, they could view the past with satisfaction as an earnest of future expansion. To this growth the convert made his contribution.

APPENDIX I

JOHN SCHUYLER: MEMORIAL IN BEHALF OF EUNICE WILLIAMS

A true and perfect Memoriall of my proceedings in behalf of Margaret Williams now Captive amongst ye Indian at the ffort of Caghenewago in Canada. Insisting upon her Release and to persuade her to go home to her father and Native Countrey, it being upon the instant and earnest desire of her ffather now minister at Deerfield in New England.

I arrived from Albany at Mont Real on ye 15th of Aprill last 1713, Where I understood ye Monsr de Vaudrille, Govern and chief of Canada, was expected then every day from Quebeck. Upon which I thought proper not to mention anything touching the aforesaid Captive, untill his Excellency should be here himself; and accordingly when he arrived here I propos'd the matter to him, who gave me all the Encouragemt I could imagine for her to go home, he also permitted me to go to her at the ffort, where she was, to prepare if I could persuade her to go home. Moreover his Excellency said, that with all his heart, he would give a hundred Crowns out of his own pockett, if that she might be persuaded to go to her Native Countrey! I observing all this then was in hopes I should prevail with her to go home. Accordingly I went to the ffort at Caghenewaga, being accompanied by one of the King's Officers and a ffrench Interpreter, likewise another of the Indian Language. Being upon the 26 Day of May, Entring at the Indian ffort I thought fitt first to apply mySelf to the Priests; As I did, Being two in Company, And was informed before that this infant (As I may say) was married to a young Indian, I therefore proposed to know the Reason why this poor Captive should be Married to an Indian, being a Christian born (tho neerly taken from the Mother's Breast and such like Instances etc.) Whereupon the priest Sett forth to me Such good Reasons with Witnesses that mySelf, or any other person (as I believe) could fairly make Objection against their Marriage: (First, s'd he they came to me to Marry them) very often wch I always refusd with good words and persuasions to the Contrary, But both continuing in their former resolution to Such a Degree that I was constrained to be absent from ye ffort three several times, because not Satisfyed My Self in their Marriage; Until at last after Some days past they both came to me, and s'd that they were Joined together, and if he would not marry them they matterd not, for they were resolved never to leave one theother. But to live together heathen like; Upon wch I thought proper to Join them in Matrimony and Such like Reasons as aforesaid the priest did plainly Sett forth and after some discourse, I desired the Priest, to let me see her at his house, ffor I knew not where to find her upon which he sent for her, who prsently came with the Indian she was

Married to both together. She looking very poor in body, bashfull in the face but proved harder than Steel in her breast, at her first Entrance into the Room I desired her to sitt down, wch she did, I first Spoak to her in English, Upon wch she did not Answr me; And I believe She did not understand me, she being very Young when she was taken, And liveing always amongst the Indians afterwards, I Employed my Indian Languister to talk to her; informing him first by the ffrench Interpreter, who understood the English Language, What he should tell her and what Questions he should Ask her Accordingly he did I understood almost all what he said to her; And found that he Spoak according to my Order, but could not gett one word from her. Upon which I desired the priest To Speak to her, And if I could not prevaile with her to go home to Stay ther, that she might only go to see her ffather, And directly return hither again, The priest made a long Speech to her and endeavored to persuade her to go, but after almost half an hours discourse could not get one word from her; And afterwards when he found She did not Speak, he again Endeavoured to persuade her to go and see her ffather. And I seeing She continued impersuadable to speak; I promised upon my Word and honour, if she would go only to see her ffather, I would convey her to New England and give her Assurance of liberty to return if she pleased—the priest asked her Several times for answer upon this, my earnest request and fair offers wch was after long Solicitations *zaghte oghte* which words being translated into the English Tongue, their Signification is *may be not*; but the meaning thereof amongst the Indians is a plaine denyall, and these words were all we could gett from her; in allmost two hours time that we talked with her. upon this my eyes being almost filled with tears, I said to her mySelf had I made such proposalls and prayings to the worst of Indians I did not doubt but have had a reasonable Answere and consent to what I had sd. Upon wch her husband seeing that I was so much concerned about her replyed had her ffather not Married againe She would have gone and Seen him long Ere this time, But gave no further reason and the time growing late and I being very Sorrowful that I could not prevail upon nor get one word more from her, I took her by the hand and left her in the priest's house.

John Schuyler.

Cited from George Sheldon, *History of Deerfield, Massachusetts* (1898), I, 249; also found in C. Alice Baker, *True Stories of New England Captives Carried to Canada during the Old French and Indian Wars* (1897), 142-144.

APPENDIX II

SERMON PREACHED IN BEHALF OF EUNICE WILLIAMS

You may well think I have all along had some special eye to the uncommon occasion of prayer at this time; that *Person* here present with us, who has been for a long time in a miserable captivity, with a barbarous and heathen people now for more than thirty-eight years; yet among that people bred up in Papist superstition, blindness and bigotry, who by the Providence of God, came last year, and now again with her husband and two of her children on a visit to her friends in New England. Some of you know well, and I am sure I do, how long she has been the subject of prayer, what numberless prayers have been put up to God for her by many *holy souls* now in Heaven? as well as many who yet remain on earth? How many groans and fervent prayers can these ears witness to have been uttered and breathed forth with a sort of burning and unquenchable ardor from the pious and holy soul of her dear Father, now with God. I know not that ever I heard him pray after his own return from captivity without a remembrance of her; that God would return her to his sanctuary, and the enjoyment of the Gospel light and grace in that purity and simplicity in which it shines in our land. But in this it seemed as if he never could be denied, that God would not let her perish in Popish superstition and ignorance; but let her place be where it would, that he would, or he easily could find some way for deliverance from those snares and thick laid stratagems of the devil to beguile and ruin poor souls, and make her a monument of his glorious and Almighty grace. And this he was wont to do with such expressions of faith in God and holy fervors of his soul as seemed to breathe himself and her into the arms of the covenant of grace. God did not give him leave to see the performance of his wishes and desires for her, but took them to satisfy him in God himself, and make him perfectly know that not a little of the covenant should ever fail; and left her in the same state to try the faith, and call forth the prayers of his people still. We now see some dawnings towards her deliverance, and living hopes of it; though all endeavors of men to persuade her here have been heretofore tried in vain; it has pleased God to incline her the last summer, and now again of her own accord to make a visit to her friends; and seems to encourage us to hope that He designs to answer the many prayers which have been put up for her, and by the mighty power of his Providence and grace to give us one extraordinary conviction that he is a God hearing prayer.

Extract from a Sermon preached at Mansfield, August 4, 1741, at a time set apart for the revival of religion, and on behalf of Mrs. Eunice, the daughter of the Rev. Mr. John Williams, who was then on a visit there, from Canada, where she had been long in captivity by Soloman Williams, A.M., Pastor of the first Church in Lebanon.—*A Biographical Memoir . . .* by Stephen Williams (1837), 111-112.

APPENDIX III

THE WILL OF THE REVEREND JOHN THAYER

In The Name of God Amen I the Reverend John Thayer of the city of Limerick, being of sound and disposing mind and memory and understanding do make and publish this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following (that is to say) I give leave devise and bequeath all my property both real and personal, and of every other kind nature and description whatsoever in the town of Boston or in any other part of North America unto the Reverend Doctor John Chevreux Roman Catholic Bishop of Boston aforesaid and the Reverend Francis Matignon Vicar General of the Diocese of Boston and the survivor of them and the heirs executors and administrators of such survivor, to be by them laid out applied and disposed of in the manner particularly ordered mentioned and set forth in the Will heretofore duly signed sealed and executed by me and remaining in the possession of the said Reverend Francis Matignon one of my executors therein named, and my Will is and I do hereby order and direct that my executors herein after named shall as soon after my decease as conveniently may be sell and dispose of all my books, and other saleable matters of which I may die possessed and shall forward or remit the money or produce of the sales thereof together with all my papers or other matters of my property that may remain unsold with all convenient speed after such sale to the town of Boston, to the said Reverend John Chevreux and the Reverend Francis Matignon to be by them also disposed of to answer the uses and Trusts mentioned and contained in my said former Will remaining in the hands and possession of the said Francis Matignon. And I do hereby nominate constitute and appoint the Reverend Charles Hanrahan Parish Priest of Saint Mary's Parish in the City of Limerick and the Reverend Richd. Walsh Parish Priest of Thomond Gate executors of this my last Will and Testament to carry the same and my intentions as to any property I may die possessed of in this country into due execution. In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal this first day of February in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifteen.

Signed sealed published and declared
by the said John Thayer; to be his last
Will and Testament in the presence of
us who have hereunto subscribed our
names as witnesses thereto in the
presence of the testator at his request
and in the presence of each other—

John Thayer

Jno. Fitzgerald

N (?) Majoney (Mahony?)

Catharine M Ryan

Made from the original in the Limerick Diocesan Archives through the courtesy of the Reverend P. J. O'Callaghan, Secretary to the Most Reverend David Keane, Bishop of Limerick, Ireland.

APPENDIX IV

CHILDREN OF VIRGIL HORACE AND JERUSHA BOOTH BARBER

Mary (1810-1848). In April, 1826, Mary went to Boston where Bishop Fenwick had made arrangement for her entrance into the Ursuline Convent at Mount St. Benedict, Charlestown, Massachusetts. Taking the veil, August 15, 1826, she received the name of Sister Mary Benedict. When the convent was burned by the anti-Catholic mob in 1834, she went with other Sisters to the Quebec community where she died on May 8, 1848.¹

Abigail (1811-1880). Abigail accompanied her sister Mary to Boston, but proceeded to Quebec where Bishop Fenwick had made arrangements for her entrance into the Ursuline Community there. She took the name of Sister Mary Francis Xavier on the day of her clothing, September 15, 1826. Here she labored until her death, May 2, 1860.²

Susan (1813-1837). After a childhood spent with the Visitandines at Georgetown Susan left on August 28, 1827, for Mount St. Benedict Academy. Later, May 21, 1830, she entered the boarding school of the Sisters of Three Rivers. After some months she entered the novitiate, and on March 19, 1831, received the name of Sister Mary St. Joseph. She died on January 28, 1837, after a short religious life marked by fervor and generosity.³

Josephine (1816-1887). Josephine left the Visitation Academy at Georgetown in company with her sister Susan, 1827, to enter the Ursuline Academy at Charlestown. In the autumn of 1830, because of ill health, she was sent to spend some months in the family of Captain Bela Chase of Cornish, New Hampshire. She seems also to have spent a short time with Susan at Three Rivers. Returning to Georgetown in 1833, she was appointed, as a postulant, to the new foundation at Kaskaskia. On the way the colony stopped at Frederick, Maryland, where her father was then stationed. This was the last time Josephine saw him. She stayed at Kaskaskia until 1844, when she with her mother, and her cousin, Sister Beatrice Tyler, were among the number to open a Visitation Convent in St. Louis. Here she was employed principally as a teacher of music, composition, and painting. She died at St. Louis in 1887.⁴

Samuel (1814-1864). Samuel was educated at Georgetown College where he received his Bachelor of Arts on July 27, 1830. He entered the Society and made his vows as a Jesuit novice at Whitemarsh, Maryland,

¹ Archives of the Ursuline Community of Quebec; Louis de Goesbriand, *Catholic Memoirs of Vermont and New Hampshire* (1886), 83, 98, 116-117.

² Archives of the Ursuline Community of Quebec; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 78-98; 119-120.

³ Archives of the Ursulines of Three Rivers; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 127.

⁴ Archives of the Visitation; Helen Troesch, "The First Convent in Illinois," *Illinois Catholic Historical Review*, I (1918-1919), 352.

August 10, 1832. He was sent to Rome for his studies and was ordained priest on September 22, 1839. The next year he returned to America. He filled with ability and success the various offices of professor and vice-president at Georgetown College, master of novices at Frederick, Maryland, and president of the college, known today as Gonzaga High School in Washington, D. C. When transferred from Washington, he was made superior at St. Thomas Manor in Charles County, Maryland, where he died, February 23, 1864.⁵

⁵ *Woodstock Letters*, IV (1875), 31; V (1876), 174, 185; XI (1882), 91; John Gilmary Shea, *Memorial of the First Centenary of Georgetown College* (1891), 66, 75, 146; Goesbriand, *op. cit.*, 99, 123; *Gonzaga College: An Historical Sketch* (1922), 49-54.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.C.Q.R.—*American Catholic Quarterly Review.*

C.H.R.—*Catholic Historical Review.*

D.A.B.—*Dictionary of American Biography.*

D.N.B.—*Dictionary of National Biography.*

H.R.S.—*Historical Records and Studies.*

Records—Records of the American Catholic Historical Society.

Researches—American Catholic Historical Researches.

U.S.C.M.—*United States Catholic Magazine.*

U.S.C.H.M.—*United States Catholic Historical Magazine.*

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

From Canada the most helpful sources of information were from the Ursuline Convents in Quebec and Three Rivers, the Hôtel-Dieu in Quebec and Montreal, and from the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame in Montreal.

In Boston there are two excellent sources of material on the colonial period—The Massachusetts Historical Society and the State House. The former, founded in 1791, has valuable collections of manuscripts, among which are the Belknap, Randolph, Winthrop, and Parkman Papers. In the collection presented to the Society by Jeremy Belknap may be found the original journal and papers of Nathaniel Wheelwright, written in 1753 when he was commissioner for the exchange of captives in Canada. Here also are many of the early papers of the period including the *Massachusetts Centinel*, which became the *Columbian Centinel* in 1790; *The Independent Chronicle and Universal Advertiser*; the *Salem Gazette*, and the *Massachusetts Spy*. These newspapers have items about the priests mentioned in this dissertation, especially Bandol, Rousselet, Thayer, Matignon, and Bishop Cheverus; they throw some very interesting sidelights on the social, political, and educational life of their times. The manuscripts in the State House deal primarily with early legislation, military affairs, and petitions. Many of these are photostated. From St. John's Seminary at Brighton, Massachusetts, were obtained Bishop Fenwick's "Memoranda" and "Memoirs" of the early history of the diocese.

In New York the Baptismal Register of St. Peter's, Barclay Street, was consulted. The informational centers at Trinity, St. Mark's, and St. George's Episcopal churches contained no data additional to that found in their parish histories. In the Fordham Archives are "Catahdén: An Ancient Penobscot Indian Fable, a Poem in Five Cantos," and a letter from Virgil Barber to his superior, the Reverend Francis Dzierozynski, S.J., headed Claremont, New Hampshire.

The Woodstock Archives contain the diary of Virgil Barber, his Memoirs, and his revision of Alvarez' *Latin Grammar*; the *Woodstock Letters* reveal few additional facts concerning the Barbers. The writer also used the files of the Visitation Archives at Georgetown, D. C., which include manuscript sketches of Archbishop Neale and Father Clorivière; "The Convent Book," "The Annals," and other pertinent data disclose the early history of the Visitandine foundation.

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